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PART LXVIII.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

December 1881.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART LXVIII.

No. 1.

Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 126.)
My Lord, *Scutari, November* 22, 1881.

DERVISH PASHA is still in the district of Dibra, where he is collecting the arrears of taxes, and endeavouring to apply more strictly than has hitherto been found possible the military conscription.

He has also, with the above objects, been in personal communication with the Beys of Elbassan, whom he had summoned to Dibra, and who have only been allowed to return to their native district under the engagement that conscripts and taxes will be sent punctually and regularly to the Government centres.

As at Jacova, Ipek, and Prisrend, these administrative results are likely to prove of a transitory character, and entirely dependent on the presence within striking distance of Dervish Pasha and his battalions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 2.

Earl Granville to Mr. Lascelles.

(No. 80.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 2, 1881.

I INCLOSE copy of a despatch from the Turkish Government to Musurus Pasha,* which his Excellency has communicated to me, complaining of the difficulties raised by the Bulgarian Delegates on the Turco-Bulgarian Lands Commission, by which the prospect of arriving at a settlement of the questions before it are indefinitely delayed, and I shall be glad to have your observations upon this despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 3.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 800.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, December* 2, 1881.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 945 of the 25th October, I have to request you again to remind the Porte as to the joint communication to the Powers respecting the Turco-Russian Boundary in Asia.

* See Part LXVII, No. 39.

The correspondence on the subject was laid before Parliament at the end of last Session, and its distribution cannot be delayed much longer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 4.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 5.)

E
(No. 1041 A.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 22, 1881.*

IN compliance with your Lordship's instructions I repaired to the Porte to-day, and strongly advised the Minister for Foreign Affairs not to give expression to the irritation which has been occasioned by the precipitate suppression of the Turkish Post Office at Larissa by taking reprisals on the Greek Post Offices in Turkey. I observed that the Porte would best consult its dignity and self-respect by not noticing the incident, as the Ottoman Government is hardly in a position at present to constitute such a postal service of its own as would command the confidence of the European public.

Assim Pasha replied that the action of the Greeks in the matter had been quite intolerable; that the Turkish Government had only asked that their Post Office might be allowed to continue in operation for a few months, and that it would have been so easy for the Greek Government to have dealt with the matter in a courteous and gentlemanlike spirit.

Europe must admit that Turkey had shown the utmost magnanimity and good faith in the surrender of the beautiful provinces which had been ceded to Greece. If their loss had been the result of an unsuccessful war, they would not have felt the insult so deeply; but that a Government who had acquired such an extension of territory through no exertions of their own should so abuse their position was very galling. Moreover, a diplomatic discussion on the point was actually pending when the Greek zaptiehs came and turned the Turkish Post Office officials out of the building.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 5.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 1050.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 25, 1881.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 733 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to state that in reply to further representations which I have made to Assim Pasha on the subject of the Christian merchants of Janina imprisoned in Constantinople, I have been again informed by his Excellency that it is not probable that the sentence pronounced against them will be carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 6.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 5.)

No. 1055.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 28, 1881.*

THE papers here report that Dervish Pasha is still in the district of Dibra, completing the subjugation of the mountain tribes in that locality. It is stated that the chief object of Dervish Pasha is to enforce the law of military conscription, of which the application in the above-named district has hitherto not been effected. Dervish Pasha has arrested the Mufti of Pristina and Zia Bey, two of the most influential personages of Dibra, and has sent them under a strong guard to Salonica, whence they will be embarked to live in exile at Orfa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 7.

Mr. Ford to Earl Granville.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 256.)
My Lord, *Athens, November 22, 1881.*

IN the course of a conversation I held yesterday with M. Vlacho, Director-General of the Greek Foreign Office, he said that the Turkish Government had not just reason to feel annoyance at the suppression of the Turkish post offices at Larissa and other parts of Thessaly on the occasion of the occupation of that province by Greece.

It followed, he said, as a natural consequence of the cession of the territory, that the Turkish post offices should be closed, inasmuch as no foreign Power exercised the right of maintaining post offices of their own in any portion of the Kingdom of Greece.

With regard to Greek post offices in the Empire of Turkey, the question was very different. Greek post offices had long existed there in virtue of Treaty rights, which had been equally acquired by other foreign nations, and he said it would be exceedingly unjust were an exception to be made with regard to the Greek post offices at present established in Turkey, and if they were to be arbitrarily ordered to be closed whilst those belonging to other foreign Powers were to be permitted to remain in operation.

In the course of the same day I saw the Prime Minister, who expressed himself to me in language similar to that held by M. Vlacho. He added that he had long entertained the belief that Turkey was desirous of freeing herself from the obligation of tolerating any foreign post office whatever within the precincts of the Empire, and that the present proceedings taken in the matter with regard to Greece might, he thought, be prompted by a wish on the part of the Turkish Government to create a precedent to the prejudice of a small country like Greece which might on some future occasion be advantageously employed as an argument for pressing a general abolition of the foreign post offices established in Turkey.

M. Coumoundouros has instructed the Greek Minister at the Porte to use his best endeavours to induce the Turkish Government to relinquish their present pretensions in the post office question.

His Excellency further expressed a hope that in a matter of such importance, affecting the interests not of Greece alone, he might count on the support of the Representatives of the Great Powers in seconding the representations that would be addressed on the subject by the Greek Minister at Constantinople to the Government of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 8.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to Earl Granville by Musurus Pasha, December 5.)

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le 29 Novembre, 1881.*

APRÈS l'évacuation de Larisse, les autorités Helléniques ont intimé au bureau postal Ottoman établi en cette ville l'ordre de cesser immédiatement son service.

Avisés de ce fait, nous avons prévenu le Cabinet d'Athènes que, sans avoir à y objecter en principe, nous demandions que la suppression du service postal Ottoman à Larisse eût lieu en même temps que celle des bureaux postaux Helléniques en Turquie. Nous nous croyions en droit de penser qu'un raisonnement bon pour nous ne pouvait pas être mauvais pour la Grèce.

En faisant part de nos réflexions au Gouvernement Hellénique, nous exprimions l'espoir qu'il ne se refuserait pas à une entente avec nous, et qu'il ne se servirait pas de mesures coercitives pour arrêter notre service postal, tout en maintenant le sien. Malheureusement notre attente a été déçue; la poste Ottomane à Larisse a été supprimée de vive force par les autorités locales avant l'issue des négociations engagées.

Nous nous sommes adressés au Cabinet d'Athènes pour lui demander de révoquer cette mesure violente adoptée sans aucune notification préalable au Gouvernement Impérial, et d'attendre au moins qu'une entente pût s'établir entre les deux Gouverne-

ments. Mais M. Coumoundouros a refusé de prendre en considération cette démarche toute conciliante de notre part, en alléguant qu'en sa qualité d'Etat indépendant, la Grèce ne saurait permettre à aucun Etat étranger d'établir des bureaux de poste dans le Royaume. Nous n'avons pas manqué de relever cette allégation. Si, en effet, la Grèce ne peut, comme Etat indépendant, consentir au fonctionnement du service postal Ottoman sur son territoire, la Turquie, Etat tout aussi indépendant, doit insister à son tour sur la cessation du service postal Hellénique dans l'Empire.

Le Gouvernement Hellénique a invoqué, il est vrai, le traitement de la nation la plus favorisée; mais nous lui avons répondu que ce principe était absolument désintéressé dans l'espèce, attendu qu'il ne s'agissait point de l'exercice d'un commerce, d'une industrie, ni d'un droit découlant des Traités. Malgré cette argumentation irréfutable, il a opposé une fin de non-recevoir à notre légitime réclamation.

Dans ces conditions, il ne nous restait qu'un parti à prendre, celui d'user envers la Grèce des mêmes procédés qu'elle avait employés à notre égard.

Aussi, par une note que j'ai adressée au Représentant de la Grèce à Constantinople le 17 de ce mois, ai-je demandé l'envoi à qui de droit des ordres nécessaires pour la fermeture dans un délai de trois jours des bureaux postaux Helléniques dans l'Empire.

Après avoir laissé passer plusieurs jours, M. Condouriotis a fait à cette communication une réponse dans laquelle il retorque les arguments ci-dessus énoncés de son Gouvernement et achève de protester contre la résolution de la Sublime Porte.

Je ne manquerai pas de réfuter de nouveau ses arguments. En attendant, j'ai jugé nécessaire d'entretenir votre Excellence de ce qui précède afin que, le cas échéant, elle puisse y conformer son langage. Elle s'attachera surtout à faire ressortir autour d'elle combien la Sublime Porte a été péniblement affectée de voir le Cabinet d'Athènes recourir, pendant que nous étions encore en pourparlers avec lui, à la force, pour fermer notre bureau postal à Larisse.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) M. ASSIM.

No. 9.

Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 127.)
My Lord, *Scutari, November 25, 1881.*

IN connection with my despatch No. 126 of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to place before your Lordship the tenour of Dervish Pasha's language to an assemblage of all the Chiefs and Elders of Dibra and the neighbouring mountains, recently convoked by him, and which has been reported to me by a trustworthy native.

Dervish Pasha, with that earnestness which he knows so well how to assume, informed his audience that all their past misdeeds, however bad, would be overlooked by the Government, but that for the future it could not and would not remain indifferent to their doings. He, the more to impress them with the value of his words, went through all the territorial and other losses recently suffered by the Empire, and then urged that all faithful subjects of the Sultan should unite to defend and maintain what yet remained to His Majesty. If he had failed to carry his hearers with him, and they still wished to continue to live like wild beasts, killing one another, it would only remain for him to warn them that he would be the last messenger who would be sent to them from the Sultan. But then others would come from foreign quarters who would mercilessly punish them and put the country in order by violent means. Albanians should seriously weigh these facts, and agree to abandon at once their blood-feuds and other savage ways.

The speech concluded with a declaration that the Government required the payment of all arrears of taxes and similar obligations, and, if necessary, would exact them by energetic means.

As I have already reported to your Lordship, both in Dibra and the district of Elbassan the presence of Dervish Pasha has, for the time being, awed the inhabitants into submission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 10.

Earl Granville to the Earl of Dufferin.

(No. 810.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, December 8, 1881.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1034, Confidential, of the 21st ultimo, and I have to state that Her Majesty's Government approve the language you held to Saïd Pasha, as therein reported, with reference to the course which it would be wisest for Turkey to pursue towards Eastern Roumelia, in view of the formation of a National Party in that province.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 11.

Earl Granville to Mr. Locock.

(No 52.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 9, 1881.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 139, Very Confidential, of the 20th ultimo, giving me an account of what passed at an interview between yourself and your Turkish colleague with reference to the question of the Servian Agrarian Law; and I have to inform you that the language you held to Khalid Bey, as therein reported, has my approval.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 12.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 146.)
My Lord, *Salonica, November 22, 1881.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 141 of the 8th instant, it appears from the inclosed translated statement, which I have received from a Greek source, that further inquiries are being instituted into alleged insurrectionary proceedings at Mount Athos and other localities in the district of Cassandra.

These inquiries are more especially about large numbers of rifled percussion guns and barrels of gunpowder which were landed two or three years ago by a Greek vessel commanded by a certain Captain Lazzaro.

It is said among the villagers of Cassandra that the Joanni Marino mentioned in the statement I have inclosed bought up the arms and ammunition, and secretly sold them to different parties to make a profit of them, and it is also stated that Captain Lazzaro was done away with in order that he should not at any time be able to appear as a witness. At first it was said that the arrested individuals were carried on board the gun-vessel lying at Erysso and beaten, and that they were taken to Cavalla, but I am assured that they did not go to Cavalla, but were landed after one or two days' detention on board and released on bail.

Numerous arrests were effected at Erysso, Isvor, Ourmelia, and Polyghero. The Greek priest of Isvor, Papa Dorotheos, Agapitos Dimitrin, of Ourmelia, and Maretti, of Polygheros, are included in the number, and many individuals, some of them Hellenic subjects, about whom the authorities have been making inquiries, have sought safety in flight. A certain M. Anghelaki, a Hellenic subject, who is working some chrome mines in Ourmelia, and has been long suspected by the Local Government of furthering traitorous and disloyal practices amongst the natives of Cassandra, has taken refuge in Thessaly.

It is also said that the authorities have discovered important documents in the house of the above-named Joanni Marino at Erysso, implicating several well-to-do Greeks of Salonica in treasonable proceedings.

Of course, it is impossible for me to say whether the persons arrested are really implicated or not. It is probable the priest of Isvor is more the tool of others. It is difficult, however, to judge, knowing, as I do, the cunning nature of the inhabitants of the Cassandra district; but I am inclined to believe, from all I hear, that most of the persons concerned in these proceedings were instigated not by feelings of patriotism, but by the base motive of plunder.

Be this as it may, I do not think that the present inquiries of the authorities are for the purpose of discovering any plot that may be brewing, but that they are directed towards finding out and prosecuting the parties who were concerned in preparing and instigating a rising in Macedonia in the event of war between Turkey and Greece.

In my despatch No. 119, Confidential, of the 26th October, 1880, I reported to your Lordship that such a rising was meditated, and I have no doubt that it would have burst out had the settlement of the Greek Frontier question been longer deferred.

Now that this important question has been satisfactorily disposed of, I venture to express the opinion that a policy of conciliation will be more conducive to the restoration of tranquillity and order in this province. A policy of mistrust and severity will perpetuate the state of unrest from which the country has so long suffered, and seriously interfere with the application of the domestic reforms the Porte is bound to make under the Treaty of Berlin.

The local authorities, to whom I have unofficially spoken in the above sense, appear disposed to let bygones be bygones, but can take no independent action in the matter, as the inquiries instituted in the district of Cassandra have been ordered by, and are carried out, with the sanction of the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Statement relative to Inquiries instituted into alleged Treasonable Acts in District of Cassandra.

(Translation.)

COLONEL MEHEMET BEY, Aide-de-camp to the Sultan, arrived here a few days ago, ostensibly for the purpose of instituting an inquiry into the conduct of the Government functionaries of this district, but in reality on a secret mission, on which he has been dispatched by His Majesty to various parts of Macedonia, and, amongst others, to the holy monasteries of Mount Athos, a measure which owes its adoption to Court intrigue and certain calumnious representations which have been made to His Majesty the Sultan concerning the Fathers Superior of the monasteries of Mount Athos and their sacred order. This officer had provided himself with a passport ("bouyourouldi") from the Governor-General, addressed to the Kaïmakam of Athos, the seat of whose Government is Karnays, and, accompanied by Iskender Bey as interpreter, set out for his destination, the Holy Mount.

On arrival he visited several of the monasteries, in some of which, after inquiries, he discovered the existence of a small quantity of gunpowder and a few flintlocks, all of antique workmanship, destined exclusively for the use of the "gardes-champêtres" of the monasteries. He then demanded of the Holy Brotherhood a list containing the number and names of the monks and novices who are living in the monasteries and cells, and another setting forth the amount of arms and military stores they have there. The Representative Assembly of Athos very readily supplied the required lists, in the latter of which, containing the amount of arms and military stores, 448 arms of old-fashioned workmanship, 134 pistols, and 25 to 27 okes of gunpowder, were put down as existing in the various monasteries, lodges, and cells.

Iskender Bey, finding the list of monks as supplied to him to be defective, because it did not give, he maintained, the exact number of the Fathers of the Sacred Order of the Prophet Elias, while he found fault with the other list on the ground of its concealing the real number and amount of the arms and military stores found in the monasteries, returned both lists to the Representative Body, and then made every possible effort to compel the Fathers Superior to confess what he affirmed to be the actual amount of arms and military stores concealed at Mount Athos, and which, he declared, reliable information supplied to His Majesty the Sultan represented as considerable. In vain, the Fathers assured him that both lists were correct and gave a faithful account both as to the number of monks and the amount of arms, protesting against the unjust and unfounded suspicions and insinuations of Mehemet Bey, for this officer now bade them show him the Imperial Firmans establishing the privileges of the Order of Mount Athos. The Representative Assembly resisted this demand, on the ground that the Imperial Firmans are deposited with their agents at Constantinople and Salonica; whereupon Mehemet Bey left Mount Athos, accompanied by his

interpreter, after giving vent to sundry menacing expressions against the Fathers for their, by him, alleged concealment of the truth. He came here (Salonica), and during his short stay was in constant communication with his Sovereign by means of telegrams in cypher. The outcome of this secret correspondence was the dispatch from Constantinople of a man-of-war with a battalion of infantry to Eryssus, whither Mehemet Bey also betook himself, availing himself for that purpose of a small gun-vessel belonging to the local harbour service. He arrived at Eryssus on the 28th ultimo (November 10th), and, after summoning Hassan Effendi, the Major stationed at Pologzros, he proceeded on the day after his arrival, with the assistance of a detachment of about fifty men serving under the latter, to effect the arrest of sundry Christian notables. The number of those arrested and their names have not yet transpired. The only really trustworthy information on this point is, that among the first to be arrested were Nicolius Pappargyros, adviser, and Nicolaus Chrysoulas, a coffee-house keeper, both inhabitants of Eryssus. These men were carried off by the soldiers and put on board the man-of-war which had come there from Constantinople, and on which Mehemet Bey was passing the night. They were then and there mercilessly flogged and subjected to every kind of torture by order of Mehemet Bey, in order that they might be forced through ill-treatment into a confession, to extort which such inhuman measures were being taken by their prosecutors, as to the whereabouts of the spot on Mount Athos in which arms and military stores were alleged to be concealed, and of the persons who are implicated in the landing and keeping of the same.

Besides these persons, Pappa Dorotheos, the priest of Isvor, was also arrested and put on his oath, in the presence of Mehemet Bey, in confirmation of the depositions made by him about this affair, depositions which were in no way pleasing to the Imperial Emissary.

Among those who have been persecuted in consequence of denunciations charging them with complicity in the landing and keeping of the arms and military stores is Joannes Marinos, of Eryssus, who was arrested here and carried off to Pologyros.

According to the latest news received from Eryssus, Mehemet Bey has left that place for Cavalla on board the man-of-war which we mentioned as being at his disposition, taking with him the battalion of infantry under his command, Pappa Dorotheos, the priest of Isvor, and four other Christians whom he had arrested at Eryssus, and whom he kept in confinement on board ship.

Salonica, November $\frac{4}{16}$, 1881.

No. 13.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 10.)

E
(No. 147.)

Salonica, November 23, 1881.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I have heard from well-informed persons, who have recently visited Monastir, Prisrend, and Useup, that Dervish Pasha, having succeeded in restoring some degree of order and tranquillity in the Sandjak of Debra, is now making strenuous efforts to carry out the following measures:—

The military conscription; a general census of the population; the collection of the arrears of taxes; the security of the public roads leading to Prisrend on the north and Monastir on the south; the banishment of all suspected persons; and the suppression of blood-feuds which disturb the social condition of the Ghega Albanians.

It appears that these measures were discussed and approved of by an Assembly of the leading Albanian Notables, who were convened for the purpose by Dervish Pasha, shortly after he entered Debra.

With reference to the suppression of blood-feuds, the Assembly recommended the establishment of Commissions in the principal districts for hearing and determining all outstanding cases of "Vendetta," and having power to award to the offended party in each case a money compensation not exceeding 6,000 piastres.

The late Mufti of Pristina, Zeïnel Abeddin Bey, and Zia Bey, son of the late Abdurrahman Pasha, of that place, both of whom took a prominent part in the Albanian League, have been banished, with their families, to Syria, the first to Orfa and the second to Hama; and I now hear that their landed estates have been confiscated by the Government.

Several other Albanian Notables who were concerned in the intrigues of the League have been banished also; among them are Ismail Effendi and Eyoub Bey, of Yeni-bazar, and Nazif Bey and Gani Bey, the two last relatives of Abdul Bey Phrassari.

The latter, I find, has not been exiled to Asia Minor, as stated in my despatch No. 119 of the 12th ultimo, but is still detained in prison at Prisrend, the Sultan not having yet confirmed the sentence of the court-martial upon his case.

The latest news from Debra states that Dervish Pasha is making arrangements for an early move to Uscup, and the rumour is circulated here that he is to be appointed Inspector-General, with extensive powers over the provincial administrations of the Vilayets of Salonica, Janina, Monastir, and Cossova.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 14.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 10.)

(No. 148.)
My Lord, *Salonica, November* 23, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, extract from a letter from Castoria relative to the proceedings of the military courts at that place and at Corytza and Anaselitza, and the state of public feeling in those districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Extract from a Letter from Castoria, dated November 19, 1881.

(Translation.)

THE courts-martial recently established here and at Corytza and Anaselitza continue to arrest every peasant and townsman who is denounced by the informers as being connected by ties of relationship or affection with any member of the bands of brigands which have been already broken up. At first some people were of opinion that the object of the establishment of these courts-martial was to bring to justice and punish certain Beys suspected of giving secret encouragement to brigands. Recent occurrences, however, go to show that this was a delusion, for hitherto no Bey has been arrested, and of those persons who have been arrested, among whom are some deserters from the Ottoman army and a few contumacious eluders of justice, and who are now confined in some of the various gaols and inns, being held to bail and under police supervision, not a single one, at least here, has been put on his trial, and one or two have been set at liberty after a short examination. Among the latter is the priest Naoum, of the village of Kouoplati. It has also been noticed that the members of the courts-martial are exercising as much forbearance towards the more needy and necessitous of those brought up for trial, as they are guilty of rigid severity to those who are in comfortable circumstances.

Among those who have been arrested from the sub-district of Horopista are two Greek subjects, brothers of Dr. Pheraos, one of whom was brought here as a prisoner from Monastir, whither he had gone over with his father, after taking the oath of allegiance as a Greek subject, being a native of Pheré in Thessaly.

The proceedings of these courts-martial will bring many men to the verge of desperation, and will also effectually smooth the way for the foreign emissaries, especially those of Austria-Hungary.

For days one has heard nothing but "When will Austria come and take possession of Macedonia, and release us from the unsupportable miseries which are daily becoming more and more unendurable."

This may be heard from the lips of peasants and townsfolk over and over again, in spite of the secret police surveillance which these military courts have set on foot.

No. 15.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 10.)

(No. 149.)
My Lord, *Salonica, November* 28, 1881.

WITH reference to my Report No. 146 of the 22nd instant upon the inquiries instituted into alleged treasonable proceedings in the district of Cassandra, I have the honour to further inform your Lordship that it has been very confidently asserted here that the officials who are conducting these inquiries have cruelly tortured their prisoners, some of whom, in particular Pappa Dorotheos, of Isvor, and N. Marino, of Erysso, having died from the effects of the ill-treatment they were subjected to.

My attention having been called to the matter, I have made, and caused to be made, inquiries whether there is any foundation in these statements, and I now have the honour to submit herewith to your Lordship copy of a letter on the subject from Mr. Bizzo, Chief Dragoman of this Consulate-General.

I believe that some of the prisoners have been beaten, but the reports of their having been tortured by fire or by water are without any foundation in fact; and have been circulated in the hope of exciting the sympathy and intervention of foreign Consuls in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Mr. Bizzo to Consul-General Blunt.

Salonica, November 27, 1881.

Sir,

IN accordance with your instructions, I sent a confidential agent to Larighova and Erysso to verify the rumours which are in circulation here, and to ascertain what the officials sent by the Government have done concerning the alleged treasonable acts in the district of Cassandra, and to find out whether Marino and the priest of Isvor had actually died in consequence of the tortures to which it is said they were subjected, or not.

The following is the communication which I have received on the subject:—

At first the Government officials employed threatening language, and even proceeded to blows towards some of the peasants, in order to force them to give evidence about the arms and military stores which were secretly imported into this district some time since. Subsequently some of the inhabitants made confession concerning the aforesaid importation, whereupon the beating at once ceased, and the judicial inquiry was continued. And whereas it has been generally asserted that the priest of Isvor and Anagnosti Marino died in consequence of the torture to which they were subjected, this statement is false, those persons being alive.

Affairs are not as reported at Salonica, and the rumours which have been spread there should not be believed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JEAN BIZZO.

No. 16.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 10.)

(No. 150.)
My Lord, *Salonica, November* 20, 1881.

THE Porte has re-established the office of "Merkez Mutessarif" at the seat of the Central Government of each vilayet.

Rechad Bey has been appointed in the above capacity at Salonica, Faïk Bey at Pristina (Vilayet of Cossova), and Feizi Effendi at Janina.

No appointment has yet been made at Monastir.

A "Merkez Mutessarif" discharges the duties of local Governor at the seat of the vilayet, and acts as the deputy of the Governor-General during the latter's absence in the interior of his district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 17.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(Received December 10.)

E
(No. 151.)

My Lord, *Salonica, November* 29, 1881.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 147 of the 23rd instant relative to Albanian affairs, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, translated extract from a leading article in the "Cossova Gazette" on the subject of the measures adopted by Dervish Pasha to effect the pacification of Dibra and other Albanian districts.

I beg leave to avail myself of this opportunity to further report that the above "Gazette" confirms the report circulated here of Dervish Pasha's appointment as Inspector-General ("Oumoumi Muffetish") in the Vilayets of Cossova, Monastir, and Salonica.

His Excellency arrived at Uscup yesterday, and, after a few days' rest, will proceed to Pristina to inquire into the state of the local administration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Extract from the "Cossova Gazette."

(Translation.) *Pristina, November* 23, 1881.

EVERY one is aware that, for some time past, there have been established in this district, much to the dissatisfaction of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, certain Societies styling themselves "Bands of Union." Now, these Societies having become the tools of a set of intriguing and seditious persons, who have made use of them (the said Societies) solely for the furtherance of their own personal aims, and with an eye to their own advantage, they ventured to perpetrate sundry outrages, and, indeed, things came to such a pass that the country was ripe for rebellion. This being the case, his Excellency Dervish Pasha, the Commander-in-chief, set out for this district, and on his arrival, thanks to the strong and cordial support given him so graciously throughout by his Sovereign, was able to reduce the rebels to submission by the aid of the military, and a return to peace and tranquillity was thereby effected. Seeing that the state of things above described was due to an uninterrupted succession of corrupt and seditious practices on the part of unprincipled men, who, in the selfish pursuit of their own private ends, endangered the public peace, and did harm to their fellow-countrymen, while those of the inhabitants of the district who were men of honour were being crushed by the iron heel of oppression, and remained in this helpless condition; and seeing, moreover, that so long as a man of this stamp remained in this district the firm establishment of public peace and tranquillity was an impossibility, his Excellency Dervish Pasha took prompt measures to remove this evil by banishing a considerable number of these intriguers. He has again pursued the same line of conduct by exiling the Mufti of Pristina, Zéïn-ul-Abedeen, to Ourfa, Zia Bey, son of Abdurrahman Pasha of Pristina, to Hama, and Eyoub Bey and Suleiman Effendi, both of Novi-Bazar, to Rhodes. The expatriation of these persons, and indeed of all such rebels, has given universal satisfaction, prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude to His Majesty the Sultan being offered up on all sides.

No. 18.

Mr. Locock to Earl Granville.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 144.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, November* 25, 1881.

THE complaints of the Servian Government of the frequent incursions of the Albanians into the annexed provinces have usually been met by the Porte or its Representative here by the answer that these Albanians are now not Turkish but Servian subjects, and refugees, therefore, from their own country, and that their so-called incursions or border raids are nothing more than attempts on their part to win back by force a part of what belongs to them by right.

Hitherto the invitation to them to return to their homes has been made dependent on certain conditions which it would seem they have been unwilling to accept, but by a note which has, within the last few days, been addressed by M. Pirochanatz to the Ottoman Envoy here, these conditions have been reduced to the simple one that due notice should be given by the Turkish authorities of the return of the refugees, so that the necessary measures may be taken to ensure order. On this condition they will be at once acknowledged as Servian citizens, possessing the same rights and being subject to the same civil and political duties as others, and their lands and dwellings will be restored to them in their present condition; in those cases where their property has been occupied by new colonists, an arrangement will be made for transferring the colonists to other lands, unless the Albanian refugees themselves prefer to accept other property in exchange.

I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of this note, which has been unofficially communicated to me by M. Pirochanatz, in order that your Lordship might be informed of the proposal now made to the Turkish Government.

In forwarding the note to his Government, Khalid Bey pointed out that, inasmuch as the lands of which the refugees were invited to retake possession, and which rightfully belonged to them, were at this moment lying waste, the step which the Servian Government proposed to take was perhaps dictated by some other motive than that of pure generosity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

Inclosure in No. 18.

M. Pirochanatz to Khalid Bey.

Belgrade, le $\frac{24 \text{ Octobre}}{5 \text{ Novembre}}$, 1881.

M. le Ministre,

VOTRE prédécesseur a bien voulu adresser au Gouvernement de Son Altesse, à la date du $\frac{4}{16}$ Août, 1879, une note pour réclamer, au nom du Gouvernement Impérial, en faveur des Albanais émigrés des territoires que le Traité de Berlin a réunis à la Serbie, l'autorisation de rentrer dans leurs foyers, le respect de leurs droits, et le libre exercice de leur culte.

Le Gouvernement Princier a répondu à cette demande par une dépêche du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères en date du $\frac{3}{15}$ Septembre, 1879, adressée au Représentant de Son Altesse à Constantinople et exposant les conditions qu'il croyait devoir mettre au rapatriement des Albanais.

Comme la Sublime Porte n'a ni adhéré à la proposition du Gouvernement Princier, ni fait connaître ses objections aux conditions formulées, la question est restée sans solution et un petit nombre seulement de familles Albanaises, profitant de la faculté donnée, sont revenues prendre possession de leurs biens.

Animé de sentiments d'humanité ainsi que du désir de voir régner l'ordre sur une partie de la frontière où il est fréquemment troublé par des incursions, le Gouvernement de Son Altesse est prêt à faire tout ce qui dépend de lui pour arriver au réglement définitif de cette question, tout en prouvant une fois de plus combien il a à cœur le maintien des bons rapports avec le Gouvernement Impérial.

Je prie donc votre Excellence de communiquer à la Sublime Porte le désir du Gouvernement Princier et de bien vouloir interposer ses bienveillants offices afin que la question du rapatriement des Albanais soit réglée d'une manière équitable et que les autorités Impériales y apportent de leur côté tout le concours possible.

Le Gouvernement de Son Altesse ne subordonne la rentrée des Albanais dans la Principauté à aucune autre condition que celle d'en être avisé préalablement, afin de pouvoir prendre les mesures nécessaires au maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité.

Il va de soi, qu'en rentrant dans leurs demeures les Albanais acquerront, par le seul fait de leur rapatriement, la qualité de citoyens Serbes, qu'ils jouiront des mêmes droits que les autres ressortissants du pays, mais seront ainsi assujettis aux mêmes devoirs civils et politiques que ces derniers.

Quant au libre exercice de leur culte, il leur est garanti par la Constitution de la Principauté.

Les biens abandonnés par les émigrés leur seront restitués immédiatement dans l'état où ils se trouvent maintenant.

Dans le cas où leurs terres se trouveraient à rentrer dans leur possession, le Gouvernement se chargerait de dédommager les nouveaux occupants en leur assignant d'autres terres en échange de celles qu'ils auraient dû céder aux anciens propriétaires. Si

toutefois dans ce cas ils le préfèrent, les Albanais recevront en échange de leurs anciennes propriétés une étendue de terres égale à celles qu'ils possédaient et de la même qualité.

Quoiqu'il en soit, il ne pourra dans aucun cas être question de dédommagements d'autre nature à accorder par le Gouvernement.

L'empressement et le bon vouloir dont fait preuve le Cabinet de Son Altesse en vue du réglement d'une question qui a été l'objet des fréquentes préoccupations des deux Gouvernements nous autorise à attendre de la part des autorités Impériales le même traitement en faveur des émigrés qui se trouvent actuellement sur le territoire de la Principauté et désireraient retourner dans leur pays.

J'ai lieu d'espérer que la Sublime Porte accèdera à la proposition équitable qui lui est faite par le Gouvernement de Son Altesse, et dans l'attente d'une réponse favorable, je saisis, &c.

No. 19.

Mr. Ford to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 262.)

My Lord, *Athens, December* 2, 1881.

THE closing of the Greek post-offices in Turkey causes M. Coumoundouros considerable anxiety, the more so as the representations addressed to the Porte by the Greek Minister at Constantinople do not appear to have been successful in furthering the interests of the Greek Government.

It is to be regretted that the question of the closing by the Greek Government of the Turkish post-offices established in Thessaly was not earlier made the subject of negotiation between the Turkish and Greek Governments, for, prior to the visit made by the King of Greece to his new provinces, an amicable understanding with respect to it might perhaps have been made establishing a provisional continuance in operation of the Turkish post-office, at least, in the town of Larissa, where a population of some 30,000 Turks exists, whose letters and correspondence are addressed to them in a language with which the Greek post-office officials are no doubt imperfectly acquainted.

The fact that a certain limit of time was named in the Convention of the 24th May, during which the Turks in the ceded provinces were allowed to decide on the domicile they might elect to adopt, would have rendered a provisional arrangement with regard to post-offices feasible.

The favourable moment was lost, and now it is too late for the Greek Government to retrace their steps after having once closed the Turkish post-offices in Thessaly, and it would not be possible for them to do so at the present moment when the elections are being carried on.

M. Coumoundourous is awaiting further information from the Greek Minister at Constantinople, and he entertains the hope that the Turkish Government may reconsider its decision with regard to the closing of the Greek post-offices in Turkey, inasmuch as that act is totally at variance with the Treaty rights acquired by Greece in that country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 20.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 1073.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 4, 1881.

ONE of the local journals, "La Turquie," in publishing that Dervish Pasha has received instructions to make a tour of inspection in the Vilayets of Kossova, Monastir, and Salonica, brings to the notice of the public some remarks which the official journal of the first-named vilayet has made with regard to the Albanian League and the action of the Imperial Commission.

The official sheet of the vilayet implies that the Albanian Leagues were promoted and established, against the wish and without the knowledge of the Ottoman Government, by persons who only sought to further their personal interests. They so far succeeded as to excite a partial insurrection.

Dervish Pasha has, so it is stated, been enabled to re-establish order, to the great satisfaction of the peaceable inhabitants and of the loyal subjects of the Sultan.

Being convinced, however, that as long as the chiefs of these revolutionary associations continued to reside in the country peace could not be permanently secured, his Excellency has determined on the removal of the principal malcontents.

He has consequently exiled Zin-ul-Abbedin Bey, Mufti of Pristina; Abdul-Rahman Pasha-Zadé Zia Bey, Eyoub Bey, of Novi-Bazar, and Suleiman Effendi. The first will be confined at Orfa, the second at Hama, and the last two at Rhodes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 21.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 1074.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 6, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a message transmitted to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, through Mr. Dragoman Preziosi, in relation to the project attributed to the Russians of erecting a convent in the Shipka Pass. Assim Pasha evidently fears that this convent may prove a fortress in disguise.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure in No. 21.

Memorandum.

(Confidentiel.)

ASSIM PACHA m'a chargé de communiquer très confidentiellement à votre Excellence que, d'après le Protocole du Traité de Berlin, la Turquie ayant la faculté d'occuper les Balkans devait respecter à Shipka une certaine étendue de terrain réservé comme cimetière pour les soldats Russes morts pendant la dernière guerre. Or, d'après les informations reçues par Assim Pacha, les Russes sont en train de ramasser de l'argent pour élever un convent sur ce même emplacement. Assim Pacha attire l'attention de votre Excellence sur ce fait et lui rappelle en même temps que, pendant la campagne de 1856, un convent Russe a empêché la flotte Anglaise d'entrer dans la Mer Baltique.

(Signé) ROBERT PREZIOSI.

Péra, le 6 Décembre, 1881.

No. 22.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 1079.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 6, 1881.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 791 of the 25th ultimo, I explained to Assim Pasha the reasons which had led to the determination of Her Majesty's Government to renounce their claim to Consular jurisdiction in Bosnia, and pointed out to his Excellency that, as far as England was concerned, there was sufficient reason for the step in the fact that the Austrian Government had abandoned a similar claim in Cyprus.

His Excellency observed in reply that the Cyprus Convention could not be compared to the one concluded with Austria, as the latter was only of a temporary character, and that the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was only intended to last until order was re-established in those provinces.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 23.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 1082.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 6, 1881.

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 781 of the 24th ultimo respecting the fortifications said to be in course of erection at Batoum, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Assim Pasha has made no representations on this subject to any of my colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 24.

Sir J. Pauncefote to the Law Officers of the Crown and Dr. Deane.

Gentlemen, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith, by direction of Earl Granville, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* from which you will see that the Porte have called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the fortifications which are being constructed by the Russian Government within a short distance of the town of Batoum, a proceeding which the Turkish Government maintains is contrary to the spirit of the Treaty of Berlin and of the Protocols of the Congress.

The text of the LIXth Article of the Treaty is as follows:—

"Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie déclare que son intention est d'ériger Batoum en port franc essentiellement commercial."

In order fully to appreciate the extent of this undertaking on the part of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, it is necessary to refer to the discussions in Congress which resulted in the Article of the Treaty above quoted. You will find at pp. 207, 210, and 239 of the accompanying Parliamentary Paper the portions of the Protocols bearing on this subject.

At the sitting of the Congress on the 6th July (see Protocol No. 14 in Parliamentary Paper, "Turkey No. 39, 1878," p. 207), Prince Gortchacow stated that he was authorized to declare that the Emperor, exercising his right of sovereignty, would declare Batoum a free port. Prince Bismarck called attention to the fact that this formed a considerable modification of the Treaty of San Stefano; that it facilitated the evacuation of Batoum and its exchange for Erzeroum.

The Earl of Beaconsfield, in accepting the proposal, spoke of it as the transformation of a disputed fortress into a free port and a commercial depôt for all nations; and in the subsequent discussion as to the passage of the Straits, the Marquis of Salisbury declared that if the acquisition of Batoum by Russia had been maintained under conditions which would menace the liberty of the Black Sea, England could not have taken the engagement towards the other European Powers to interdict to herself the entry to that sea. But Batoum having been declared a free and commercial port, the English Government would not decline to renew their engagements as to the Straits.

In the remarks which Count Schouvaloff made in reply to the observations of the Marquis of Salisbury, his Excellency said that "it would be very easy to prove that Batoum constitutes a menace for no one, and that the possession of that port is only necessary to us for the purpose of securing our communications with the large territory which Russia already possesses on that portion of the Black Sea, and of securing her commerce; and that the declaration of the freedom of the port must have removed the last doubts. The port will become an important point for the commerce of the whole world; it could not be a menace for the Straits," &c.

The Marquis of Salisbury thereupon stated that, understanding that Batoum was to be only a commercial port, he therefore accepted in principle the *status quo ante* for the Straits.

To the interpretation thus given by the Second British Plenipotentiary to the declarations of the Russian Representatives no exception was taken at the time, and the declaration read by Prince Gortchacow at a subsequent sitting of the Congress is as follows: "The Plenipotentiaries of Russia have already announced to the Congress that the Emperor, their august Master, intends to convert Batoum into a free port. They are

* See Part LXVII, No. 24.

authorized to add that His Majesty further proposes to make of this port a port essentially commercial." (See Protocol No. 16, p. 239 in inclosed volume.)

The Porte state that "not only are the old fortifications of Batoum left standing, but new ones are being constructed within a short distance of the town" (Lord Dufferin, No. 972 of the 8th November, 1881). This is confirmed by the Reports of Her Majesty's Consuls, and in the latest Report it is stated that much heavy artillery is being landed at Batoum for the fortifications there, which is placed in store, while earthworks and batteries are constructed at commanding points and communications between them established by tramways.

I am to request that you will take this matter into your consideration, and that you will favour Lord Granville with your opinion as to whether the facts above stated as to the military works now proceeding at Batoum constitute a violation of the LIXth Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and of the assurances given by the Russian Plenipotentiaries at the Congress, and would justify the parties to the Treaty of Berlin, without awaiting any more detailed Reports on the subject, in addressing any representations to the Government of Russia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 25.

Earl Granville to M. Marinovich.

M. le Ministre, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1881.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your note of the 25th ultimo, in which you are good enough to inform me of the measures proposed by the Servian Government to secure the repatriation of the Albanian emigrants, and also of the arrangements made for an equitable application of the Agrarian Law.

In thanking you for this communication, M. le Ministre, I hasten to express the gratification of Her Majesty's Government at learning that the Government of Servia have proposed arrangements for remedying the grievances of the Mussulman population—arrangements which I trust will lead to a satisfactory solution of these important questions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 26.

E *Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.*—(*Received December* 16.)

(No. 131.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December* 6, 1881.

FOR the last few days rumours have prevailed here that the Hoti and Gruda tribes have decided on expelling the Montenegrin frontier guards from the vicinity of the villages Goluborci and Matagno, on the north-east shores of Lake Scutari.

Importance appears to have been attached to these reports, as Abdi Pasha, the Military Commander here, has strengthened the garrison of one battalion at Tousi by the despatch there of two additional battalions from Scutari, and, it is said, has informed the Albanian tribes that they will be opposed by the Turkish troops if they attempt to interfere with the *status quo* on the Montenegrin frontier in question.

I have been told confidentially, by a person who is in a position to know, that Abdi Pasha has been disapproved of by Dervish Pasha for having, by the despatch of troops to Tousi, added importance to the threats of the Albanian mountaineers; however, being well acquainted with Abdi Pasha's character, I am more disposed to believe that he has not taken a single step without the previous consent of the Commander-in-chief, who, together with the Porte, has been in very active telegraphic communication with the Scutari authorities during the last few days.

Although the impression among the natives exists that the Roman Catholic mountaineers intend moving against Montenegro, in order to prevent the Principality from affording any support to the resistance to Austria, which is daily increasing in the Bocche di Cattaro and Bosnia and the Herzegovina, still it is quite possible the mountain Chiefs may be acting on secret orders reaching them from the Palace at Constantinople, and the

important fact remains that, whether under Austrian or Turkish influence, the North Albanian clans are once more in an unsettled state.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 27.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 153.)
My Lord, *Salonica, December 7, 1881.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, copy of a despatch, with one inclosure, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the disarmament of the monks of Mount Athos, and the result of the inquiry instituted in the district of Cassandra in connection with an alleged insurrectionary movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 27.

Consul-General Blunt to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Salonica, December 4, 1881.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, extract from a recent letter from a correspondent at Mount Athos, stating that the Ottoman authorities have summoned the monks of all the monasteries to deliver up all the fire-arms in their possession.

It is said that the secret documents seized by the authorities of Cassandra, and the confessions made by the individual Marino, of Erysso, who has turned informer, show that everything was prepared for an insurrection in that and other districts in Macedonia in the event of a war between Turkey and Greece.

All the persons who were arrested in the villages of Cassandra have been released, with the exception of the following, who are charged with complicity in the movement:—Pappa Dorotheos, of Isvor; Hadji Ghiorghi and Nicola Vlako, of Larigova; N. Hadji Anagnosti and Petro Ghiorghi, of Polyghero; Agapitos Dimitri, of Ourmelia; Steria Kara Athanassi, of Livadi; and Dr. Athanassur, of Polyghero.

These eight individuals have been conducted to Salonica to be tried by the Local Criminal Court.

I saw them when they were brought in. They were all on horseback and in charge of two soldiers; they showed no signs of having been ill-treated, and I may add that they declared to some of their friends who visited them in prison that they had not been tortured. One of them said he had been thrashed, and all, more or less, complained of the insufficiency of the prison rations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 27.

Extract from a Letter from a Correspondent at Mount Athos.

(Translation.) *November 30, 1881.*

THE Imperial Commissioners, Mehmed Bey and Mustapha Bey, the latter having replaced the functionary originally appointed, have recently arrived at Mount Athos on their return from Erysso, and thereupon demanded of the holy brotherhood the production of all the arms in their possession, and a deposit of the same at the official residence of the Kaimakam, and this, too, without the Imperial Commissioners having produced or even read any written order whatever touching such collection of arms, which would in reality amount to a general disarmament; they merely made a verbal proposition to the brotherhood, to which the latter at once assented without making any observations, and dispatched Circulars to the monasteries containing strict injunctions to the brethren that all arms should be collected and brought to Cariès, at which village their arrival was

expected. In short, a general disarmament is now being effected on Mount Athos, much to the dissatisfaction and uneasiness of the holy fathers, who see in these unforeseen measures a multiform attack on the holy mountain.

Iskender Bey left to-day for Salonica, having been summoned, so he informed the fathers, to Constantinople by a telegram from the Sultan.

It were needless to attempt to describe the uneasiness and anxiety which these measures are causing to the holy fathers, and more especially that of disarmament, as it leaves the mount altogether without the means of self-protection.

No. 28.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 19.)

(No 1093. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 12, 1881.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from Consul-General Jones, transmitting translation of a petition addressed by the inhabitants of some unceded villages in the Canton of Rouptchos to the Prefect of Philippopoli respecting the restrictions placed on their intercourse with the latter district.

With reference to the foregoing subject, I beg to state that I have more than once pressed my colleagues in Conference to take the matter up and to induce the Porte to promote an effectual cession of all the Rhodope villages, but none of the Ambassadors, not even M. Novikoff, have shown any disposition to move in the matter, and having myself already made strenuous representations on the subject at the Porte, I do not see that there is any good for the present in renewing them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 28.

Consul-General Jones to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Philippopoli, December 6, 1881.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency the accompanying copy of a petition addressed by the inhabitants of the unceded villages of the Rouptchos to the Prefect of Philippopoli, praying that the restrictions lately placed on their intercourse with this district might be removed, in view of the inconvenience to which it subjects them.

As the Porte professes to have duly ceded these villages to Roumelian authority, which they have not yet consented to recognize, the Provincial Government considered that the simplest and safest means of effecting their submission would be to inhibit all communication between them and the province, on whose markets they are absolutely dependent for their sales and purchases. From the tenour of their petition it will be seen that already they are feeling the effects of their contumacy.

A copy of the same was sent to the Porte about three weeks since by the Provincial Government, but as yet no communication has been received here in reply to the same.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY M. JONES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 28.

Petition from Villagers of the Rhodope.

(Translation.)
To the Prefect of the Department of Philippopoli.

THE prayer of your petitioners is as follows:—

The inhabitants of sixteen villages of the Canton of Rouptchos are prevented from carrying their produce to Philippopoli, and from making purchases there, and desire hereby with to set forth the injustice of their position. Their Mudir and Commissioner of Tithes are appointed from Constantinople; and, on the ground that they do not depend upon Philippopoli, their traffic and communications are interrupted, so that they cannot determine with certainty to what Government they belong. But that is a question for the two Governments to arrange between themselves. We have ventured to present you this petition, begging you to be so kind as to take the facts into your gracious consideration,

and to give your sanction and countenance to the traffic and intercourse of our villages.

(Signed) TEMRASLI MUSTAPHA-OGHLOU MEHMED,
TEMRASLI HUSSEIN-OGHLOU ALI,
(L.S.) ALI,
Representing the said Villages.

October 29, 1881.

No. 29.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 19.)

(No. 1101.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 12, 1881.

I BEG to inform your Lordship that I communicated to Said Pasha the substance of the despatch in which your Lordship calls attention to the fact that the delay in settling many of the Articles of the Treaty of Berlin in which Turkey is interested is entirely owing to the dilatoriness of the Porte in taking the preliminary steps necessary for their settlement.

In making this communication, I assured his Highness that your Lordship was as anxious to have all the outstanding points connected with that Treaty settled to the satisfaction of Turkey, as to that of the other interested Powers.

His Highness begged me to assure your Lordship that he fully appreciated the friendly spirit of the foregoing communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 30.

Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 19.)

E
(No. 468. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December* 14, 1881.

IN my despatch No. 459 of the 4th instant I reported the reception Ali Nizami Pasha had met with at the hands of the German Emperor. Since then his Excellency and the members of his Mission, as well as Sadoullah Pasha and his staff, have been entertained by the German Chancellor, and the Turkish Ambassador has given a grand dinner to the Emperor's Ministers, the Household, and the leading military authorities.

These demonstrations have led the press to infer that Ali Nizami Pasha, assisted by Reschid Bey, the Sultan's favourite Private Secretary, has come to Berlin, not only to present the insignia of the new Turkish Order to the Emperor, but also to negotiate a secret Treaty of Alliance with Germany, the object of which is vaguely suspected to be either the restoration of the Sultan's suzerainty over Tunis, or the accession of the Sultan as fourth ally in the Dreikaiserbund.

On the other hand, it is officially denied, both by the German and by the Turkish authorities concerned, that Ali Nizami Pasha has any mission whatever beyond the presentation of a Turkish decoration to the Emperor, and the suspicions of the press are declared to be utterly unfounded.

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the Sultan has long since sought to acquire the good-will and support of Germany, and that Prince Bismarck has been flattered by His Majesty's overtures, and has responded to them by lending him German officials to reform his Administration.

Prince Bismarck has certainly never shown any inclination to interfere directly with Eastern affairs, and has hitherto only consented to exercise his personal influence at Constantinople at the request of the Powers more immediately concerned with Turkey than Germany is.

If he should now deviate from his former course, and listen with more complacency than he has hitherto done to the Sultan's often-repeated and pressing request for advice, it will probably be to secure the advantages which the influence the Sultan solicits him to exercise in the Councils of Turkey may offer at some later date, when his allies, Austria and Russia, again quarrel over the Sultan's inheritance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AMPTHILL.

No. 31.

Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 19, 11·20 A.M.)

(No. 103.)
(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, December* 19, 1881, 10·40 A.M.

MY despatch No. 468 of the 14th instant.

I am told on good authority that Ali Nizam Pasha is trying to negotiate a loan, and to induce German capitalists to invest in Turkish securities, but with very little success.

No. 32.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 22.)

E
(No. 1107.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 14, 1881.

WITH reference to previous correspondence concerning the Holy Places in Roumania, I have the honour to state that the subject was mooted at the last Conference of the Ambassadors held on the 11th instant, by one of my colleagues, who at the same time stated that he was not authorized to take the initiative. Both Count Corti and the French Ambassador expressed a strong opinion that the subject was not one which could be dealt with at Constantinople, but would have to be treated at Bucharest. M. Novikoff and the Austrian Ambassador were inclined to think that it was a question which, under the terms of the Protocol of the Treaty of Berlin, it would be within the competence of the Ambassadors to discuss, but neither of them showed any inclination to engage in the consideration of it.

I stated that I was authorized to associate myself with my colleagues in examining the question, and that my Government was favourable to the principle of arbitration.

The conversation was concluded by M. Novikoff taking note of the fact that it was evidently the opinion of all his colleagues that the question was an international one, and that the rights of the Holy Places were still extant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 33.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 22.)

(No. 1110.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 15, 1881.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1074 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Consul-General Jones, inclosing an extract from the "Maritza" with regard to the proposed erection of a monastery by the Moscow Committee at the Shipka Pass.

I have already informed Captain Jones that the attention of the Porte has been drawn to the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 33.

Consul-General Jones to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Philippopoli, December* 8, 1881.

I BEG leave to call your Excellency's attention to the accompanying extract from the local journal "Maritza," narrating the proceedings at Shipka of M. Vassiltchikoff, the Russian agent sent to this province, on the part of the "Moscow Church Committee," for the purpose of taking the necessary measures for erecting at Shipka certain ecclesiastical buildings in memory of the Russian soldiers fallen during the war.

In the Protocol No. 17 of the 10th July (Berlin Conference) your Excellency will observe that the Russian Representative then endeavoured to obtain his colleagues' sanction to the proposal: "That Shipka should be made a glorious cemetery, where, for the future, no batteries may be raised, nor cannon thunder!"

Mehmet Ali Pasha wished to reserve the strategical advantages of the position.

The Congress, however, resolved—in accordance with the President's suggestion—that the matter should be referred to the decision of the European Commission.

This original proposition of a "glorious" cemetery is now associated with a monastery and a school for priests. The position selected for this purpose is of the highest strategical importance, and beyond a formal request to have the deed of gift of land registered, no notification has been given as yet to the local authorities of the plans or proceedings contemplated by the Moscow Committee.

As the Porte ought to feel in some degree interested in this question, it might derive some advantage from learning further details on the subject from the Provincial Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY M. JONES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 33.

Extract from the "Maritza."

Kezanlik, November $\frac{15}{27}$, 1880.

M. VASSILTCHIKOFF left here for Shipka on Thursday morning, accompanied by MM. Arseniew and Lefait, the Bailli, and several of the leading townspeople. A deputation of villagers met him on the road. He left his carriage and advanced to greet them, and to explain the object of his mission, saying that he had been sent by the Committee specially to select the place for the construction of a monastery in memory of the war, and also for a seminary for ecclesiastical education. One of the villagers then expressed the heartfelt gratitude of the entire population, saying that it was always ready to further as far as possible the benevolent undertaking of our liberators, and would deem itself happy to see as soon as possible the foundation amongst them of these beneficent institutions. The villagers then pointed out the site selected by M. Strelecki, engineer for the construction of the Russian monuments in Bulgaria and Roumelia, which was not, however, approved. They later on examined the site chosen by M. Vonliovitch and Miss Lapoukine in May last, which M. Vassiltchikoff preferred. In reality it is one of the finest and most conspicuous points in the village. It lies to the north of the village of Shipka, beside the Gabrovo Road; near it is the stream which flows down from the summit of St. Nicholas, whence the Turks obtained their water during the last war. The engineer measured both places, which contain no less than 16 uvrata (about 5 acres).

No. 34.

Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 132.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December* 12, 1881.

I HAVE ascertained that, with reference to the matter stated in my No. 131 of the 6th instant to your Lordship, the dispatch of reinforcements by Abdi Pasha to Tousi was the result of a Report received from the Military Kaïmakam of that place, announcing that the Albanian frontier tribes had threatened to attack the Montenegrins if the very large balance, due to those tribes for military service during the past war, was not quickly paid to them.

I have not, however, been able to ascertain that there was any real intention on the part of the chiefs to commence hostilities with their Montenegrin neighbours, but, on the contrary, infer that the Report of the Kaïmakam of Tousi was a circuitous Oriental way of endeavouring to make Abdi Pasha understand that, if the Roman Catholic mountaineers did not receive the arrears of subsidies due to them, they might be tempted to take steps to bring under immediate notice the many ways in which their contiguity to Montenegro may be used to affect injuriously Ottoman interests.

Abdi Pasha having no funds at his disposal to meet the demands of the Albanian mountaineers has probably found it expedient to act up to the letter of the Kaïmakam's Report, and thus, whilst disguising his fear of the Albanians, strengthen the Turkish

position at Tousi, it being much more likely, in view of the absence of all payments, to be the object of attack than either Goluborči or Matagno; and I now hear that the mountaineers have so interpreted the arrival of the reinforcements, and have already commenced to carry off stray Turkish transport animals and cattle.

I have frequently, in a friendly way, pointed out to the authorities here the dangers of, at this moment, attempting to treat the North Albanian Roman Catholic frontier tribes in the same manner as all other creditors of the Empire, for, if the mountaineers are once convinced of the inability of the Government to pay them, they will quickly lose all faith in the power of the Sultan, and become easily amenable to alien pecuniary influences.

But the recent cue given by the Porte to its provincial Representatives, as to the attention to be paid to Consular officials, necessarily weakens all good-intentioned attempts to induce Valis and others to avoid rocks ahead, and limits the employment of Consular action on the side of the Christian native populations, or of those who are in opposition to the local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 35.

Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 134.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December* 13, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Dervish Pasha, before leaving the district of Dibra for Uskub, distributed garrisons of regular troops in Upper and Lower Dibra, Mattia, Elbassan, Ochrida, and Kostovo.

Whilst the Pasha was present in Dibra a very salutary effect was observable in all the surrounding districts, but the moment he turned his back on them a relapse to the former state of lawlessness occurred, and I hear that General Ismet Pasha, who now commands the troops in Dibra, reports that he has great difficulty in maintaining his position.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 36.

Consul-General Blunt to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 155.)
My Lord, *Salonica, December* 10, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople relative to the affairs of Mount Athos and the district of Cassandra.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Consul-General Blunt to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Salonica, December* 8, 1881.

WITH reference to the alleged infliction of torture upon some of the prisoners in the district of Cassandra, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the matter appears to have been brought under the notice of the Sultan, for the Acting Governor-General has received a telegraphic despatch from the Secretary of His Majesty ordering the presence at "Yildiz-Kiosk" of Pappa Dorotheos of Isvor, the priest who, it was rumoured here, had died from the effects of most cruel treatment.

Pappa Dorotheos left this by last Monday's boat for Constantinople, in charge of a police officer.

The latest news which I have received from Mount Athos states that the fire-arms were being collected at all the Monasteries, and would be delivered to the Turkish authorities on the 5th instant; further, that the two military officers, Mustapha Bey and Mehmed Bey, who are conducting the inquiry at Mount Athos, have arrested several

individuals, including some Monks, who are suspected of concealing fire-arms and ammunition.

They have also called upon the Monastic community to furnish them with written answers to the following questions:—

1. The number of Monks and other inmates of each Monastery;

2. The quantity of gunpowder required by the Monasteries for the celebration of religious festivals and for blasting purposes, and from where it is procured;

3. Whether the Monasteries have any permission from the Government to cut timber in the forests of the district.

My informant assures me that the Monks are very much excreised and excited by the investigation and proceedings of the above officers, and have prepared a Memorial on the subject for presentation to the Russian, Greek, Roumanian, and Servian Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 37.

E (No. 163.) *Mr. Lascelles to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)*

My Lord, *Sophia, December 10, 1881.*

SOME weeks ago a Synod of the Bulgarian Church assembled at Sophia for the discussion of questions relating chiefly to the discipline and payment of the inferior clergy. The Synod is composed of the Bishops of Sophia, Rustchuk and Shumla, Slivno and Philippopoli, under the presidency of the Bulgarian Exarch.

Some doubt existed as to the meeting taking place, as it was said that the Governor-General of Eastern Roumelia had refused permission to the Bishops of that province to attend the Synod. I am, however, informed that the real reason of the hesitation of those Prelates was the fear that the question of a reconciliation of the Bulgarian Church with the Patriarch of Constantinople would be discussed.

It appears that this question was raised by the Russian Embassy at Constantinople, and that the Exarch was induced to include it in the list of subjects to be discussed by the Synod. This idea, however, met with considerable opposition on the part of the Bulgarians, and the Bishops of Slivno and Philippopoli refused to attend the Synod until they received an assurance that the question should not be brought forward.

It is somewhat remarkable that Russia, who in 1866 favoured the Bulgarian schism, should now seek to bring about a union between the Bulgarian Church and the Patriarchate, but it has been explained to me that in 1866 the object of Russia was to stimulate the sentiment of nationality among the Bulgarians, and that that object having now been obtained, Russian interests would be better advanced by a close union of all the members of the Orthodox religion, who would look to Russia as their natural protector.

Whatever the object of Russia may have been, the idea of a reconciliation between the Bulgarian Church and the Patriarch of Constantinople has been abandoned, at all events for the present, in consequence of the refusal of the Bulgarian Bishops to entertain the question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 38.

E (No. 165.) *Mr. Lascelles to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)*

My Lord, *Sophia, December 10, 1881.*

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 72 of the 9th ultimo, I have communicated to Mr. Voulcowitch the substance of Mr. Brophy's despatch No. 17 of the 7th October relative to the continued occupation, by Bulgarian immigrants, of property in the neighbourhood of Varna belonging to Mussulmans, and the indifference of the local authorities to the complaints of the rightful owners.

M. Voulcowitch said that he would give his attention to this matter, with which he was as yet unacquainted. He reminded me that a large number of Mussulmans had left the country, and had got rid of their property. He thought that there was nothing

extraordinary in their places being filled by Bulgarians, who were naturally glad to acquire property in their own country.

I replied that there could be no objection to Bulgarians acquiring property by proper means, but the point to which I was instructed to draw his Excellency's attention was the statement, that the local authorities had not given effect to the orders of the Government that the property should be restored to the rightful owners, and that the Government had not taken any measures to make those orders respected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 39.

E (No. 169.) *Mr. Lascelles to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)*

My Lord, *Sophia, December 13, 1881.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 130 of the 7th August, I have the honour to inclose a copy of a petition which has been addressed to me by the Turkish inhabitants of Kustendil, inclosing a copy of a petition which they have presented to the Prince of Bulgaria complaining that the Commission had failed to carry out the assurances which they had given with regard to the settlement of the question of Turkish property, and that the orders given by the Prince had not been executed.

It appears now that, in answer to the petition, the Prince's Secretary has stated that a new Commission will be formed to settle the question, and the Turks point out that this fresh delay will lead to their absolute ruin.

As the petition has only just reached me, I shall not have time to make inquiries into the statements contained in it before the departure of the messenger this evening. It would, however, appear that the Commission has not fulfilled the object for which it was appointed, viz., as stated in M. Stoiloff's note to me of the 6th August, copy of which was inclosed in my despatch above referred to, "faire cesser les inquiétudes des habitants Musulmans et Bulgares du district de Kustendil."

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

Inclosure 1 in No. 39.

Pétition presented to Mr. Lascelles by Mussulmans of Kustendil.

Excellence,

LES Soussignés, habitants Musulmans de Kustendil, agissant en notre propre nom et en ceux de toute la population, et ayant en vue la bonté que vous nous avez toujours montrée, prenons la liberté de nous adresser à vous pour ce qui suit.

Avant cinq jours nous avons donné à Son Altesse le Prince une pétition concernant nos propriétés, la copie de laquelle vous trouverez ci-jointe, et nous l'avons prié vouloir bien nous prendre sous sa haute protection et nous sauver de notre certaine ruine; le Secrétaire de Son Altesse, à qui notre pétition fut donnée, nous a répondu qu'on va nommer une autre Commission pour arranger la question de nos propriétés, la Commission qui se trouve maintenant à Kustendil n'étant chargée que pour enregister nos titres de propriété.

Désespérés à cause de cette réponse, qui nous porte à notre ruine à cause du retard, et ayant en vue d'un côté notre triste situation et de l'autre la bonté des Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin, qui, par l'Article XII du même Traité, nous ont rassurés nos immeubles, nous prenons la liberté de vous exposer ce qui suit.

Vous savez, Excellence, que nous ne sommes que de petits propriétaires ayant toujours vécu par les revenus de nos propriétés, et que depuis quatre ans nous n'avons rien touché de ces revenus. Le Gouvernement du pays, comme vous le savez déjà, nous a donné plusieurs promesses pour arranger la question de nos propriétés, mais aucune n'en fut encore exécutée. Comme cette triste situation, si elle durera encore quelque temps, nous précipitera sans faute à l'abime de la complète ruine, et, à ce qu'il paraît, nous allons mourir de faim, nous et nos familles, nous vous prions, Excellence, au nom de l'humanité et de la justice, vouloir bien agir avec les Représentants des autres Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin, à qui nous nous adressons aussi,

qu'on nous donne les revenus arriérés de quatre ans pour pouvoir vivre pendant l'hiver et qu'on arrange la question de nos propriétés le plus tôt que possible.

En attendant, Excellence, nous avons, &c.

Sophia, le 12 *Décembre*, 1881. (Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 39.

Petition presented to the Prince of Bulgaria by Mussulmans of Kustendil.

Monseigneur, *Sophia, le* 8 *Décembre*, 1881.

NOUS Soussignés, habitants Musulmans de Kustendil, agissant en notre propre nom et en ceux de toute la population, prenons la liberté de soumettre aux pieds de votre Altesse ce qui suit.

La Commission que votre Altesse avait daigné instituer en vue d'opérer l'achat de nos fermes louées à forfait ("keeim") pour le compte de ceux qui les exploitaient, après avoir enregistré nos titres de propriété, nous a informé officiellement que nos propriétés et terres, tant celles qui étaient exploitées par le mode d'association, que celles qui étaient cultivées à l'aide de domestiques, resteraient à notre possession comme par le passé. Contrairement à cette assurance la Commission veut désormais assimiler ces propriétés à celle de "keeim;" dans ce but elle réclame la production des titres des propriétés pour ces terres qu'elle a mises sous séquestre, en nous défendant de les travailler et en nous empêchant de faire tout acte de transaction en vente ou en achat. On veut disposer de nos terres en faveur de nos domestiques à gage, s'ils ont servi pendant dix ans.

Ainsi, quoique tous nos titres de propriété des fermes "keeim" aient été enregistrés en vue de leur achat, on ne tient pas compte des loyers qui nous sont dus par les locataires depuis quatre ans.

A la suite de notre humble requête présentée antérieurement à votre Altesse, elle a donné l'ordre formel pour que ces loyers nous soient payés. Cet ordre, qui nous a été communiqué officiellement par les autorités de Kustendil, n'obtient pas désormais l'exécution, car on a pris soin de le cacher ou de le faire disparaître.

De plus, la requête que nous avons présentée dernièrement à votre Altesse pour demander que la Commission fixe le prix d'achat des terres "keeims," a été transmise à la Commission sans aucun ordre, et celle-ci a répondu qu'elle n'a pas la mission de fixer le prix d'achat pour nos fermes "keeims," mais qu'une nouvelle Commission le fera le printemps prochain.

Nous nous trouvons, votre Altesse, réduits à la dernière extrémité de la misère; tout retard apporté à la solution de nos justes proclamations nous précipite dans l'abîme de la complète ruine. Nous supplions donc votre Altesse de daigner de prendre dans ses sentiments de haute compassion notre état en sérieuse considération, de donner l'ordre catégorique pour que nos fermes "keeims" soient immédiatement estimées et le prix nous en soit payé; que les fermes exploitées par le mode d'association ou cultivées à l'aide des domestiques restent en notre possession comme par le passé, et qu'on ne nous empêche pas de les exploiter pour gagner le moyen de notre existence, et enfin, que les loyers arriérés soient encaissés et payés aux ayants droit.

Nous avons, &c.

No. 40.

Mr. Ford to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 26.)

E (No. 272.) *Athens, December* 16, 1881.

My Lord,

I INQUIRED of M. Coumoundouros last Wednesday what progress he was making in arriving at a settlement of the Post Office question that had arisen between the Greek and Turkish Governments.

His Excellency appeared to me to regret the haste that had been shown in closing the Turkish Post Office at Larissa, and he told me that it been caused by M. Hatyopoulos, the Royal Commissioner and Civil Governor in Thessaly, who had acted in the matter without sufficient consultation with the Central Government. His Excellency said he never could have anticipated the results that ensued in consequence of that proceeding. It was now, he added, too late to retrace the step; but he trusted to effecting a compromise that might prove satisfactory to the Turkish Government, and at the same time not prejudice the interests of his own country. He hinted at the appointment provisionally of a Turkish official at the Larissa Post Office, to whom the special duty would be assigned of supervising and superintending the Turkish correspondence.

I was speaking on the same subject last evening to Tewfik Bey, the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires here, who expressed his confident hope that the matter would be amicably arranged. He, too, alluded to the appointment of a Turkish official at the Larissa Post Office as a possible means of meeting the divergent views that were entertained by the Greek and Turkish Governments on the question, and he said that the adoption of such a course would be very satisfactory in view of the fact that ere long the Turco-Hellenic Commission contemplated by the IXth Article of the Convention of the 24th May would be formed, when the appointment of such a Post Office official would be found of great utility; and he added that the fact of such an appointment being made provisionally would disarm the opposition likely to be raised against it by the political party hostile to M. Coumoundouros and the present Government.

Munir Bey, First Secretary to the Turkish Legation at Athens, leaves this evening for Constantinople, where he will remain a short time, and where he will no doubt be in a position to give the last phase of the Post Office question to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 41.

Mr. Locock to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 26.)

(No. 148.) *Belgrade, December* 17, 1881.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a Report which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Baker with regard to the Servian Agrarian Law and its administration, and the complaints of the Mussulman landlords in respect thereto.

This Report is favourable to the Servian Government, and goes to show that there has not been so much cause to complain of its action in the matter as the Mussulman proprietors have hitherto maintained.

Mr. Baker states that the contention urged by them, and on their behalf, that their tenures are almost without exception of ordinary freehold is wholly without foundation; that previous to the annexation the Sultan was Lord Paramount of all the land, portions of which frequently reverted to the Crown by escheat and forfeiture, and were regranted to others. He adds that the peasants have, as a rule, succeeded in retaining actual possession of the great bulk of the cultivated land, with sufficient beneficial interests therein to enable them to exist.

Mr. Baker then proceeds to point out that the title-deeds by which the great majority of the Mussulman proprietors hold their lands have been issued under Turkish laws relating exclusively to State property, thus showing that they were not previously regarded as the freehold of the Mussulman, but rather a species of copyhold; and he further shows that the tenure has many of the usual incidents of copyhold.

This is a point which lies at the root of the whole question, and the one on which the Servian Government principally relies when it maintains that the Agrarian Law which was passed by the Skupstchina in 1880 was not a violation of the XXXIXth Article of the Treaty of Berlin.

I see that Mr. Baker enters into the question of the legitimacy of the means by which the Mussulmans have from time to time acquired their rights, to the exclusion of those of the peasants, but I apprehend that such considerations cannot be taken into account, as they extend back to periods long anterior to the Treaty of Berlin, which was intended to deal with the lands as then held. It appears to me also that Mr. Baker goes too far when he seeks to show that the protest of the Porte against Servia's right to abolish this species of tenure is inconsistent with an admission of Servia's sovereign independence. For the Porte, equally with the Powers who have afforded her their unofficial support with the Servian Government, have based their claim to be heard on an Article of the Treaty by which that sovereign independence was obtained and secured.

I observe also Mr. Baker speaks of the mutual hatred of the Mussulmans and Christians as rendering the preservation of copyhold a moral impossibility. I must, however, add to this that I have uniformly heard, both from Turkish and Servian sources, that the relations between Mussulmans and Christians in Servia, and in the recently annexed territory, have long been of a friendly character; and it is at all events impossible to deny that the tenure in question has, notwithstanding its defects, existed for generations.

After pointing out certain difficulties with which the Servian Agrarian Commissions have had to contend, Mr. Baker states that he can find no ground for the wholesale charges of injustice brought against the Commissions by the Mussulmans, and that these are but the result of the mistake of the Mussulmans in considering themselves freeholders instead of mesne lords of copyholds, the beneficial interest in which is chiefly in the tenants.

In Mr. Baker's opinion, the most substantial of the Turkish grievances is the operation of Article 27 of the Agrarian Law, which allows to the peasants five years for the payment by instalments of the enfranchisement money, with only 6 per cent. interest. Your Lordship is aware that this grievance has been already prospectively removed by the offer of the Servian Government to take on itself the immediate payment.

I observe that Mr. Baker is inclined to question, though for another reason than that I had the honour to name to your Lordship in my despatch No. 122 of the 11th September, the genuineness of many of the title-deeds produced by the Mussulmans before the Commissioners, though he does not suggest that they have been obtained from Constantinople for the purpose of claiming properties which the Mussulmans had not previously had in actual possession; he believes, however, that as to measurements they are very unreliable.

In the concluding paragraph of his Report, Mr. Baker states that he is led to form the opinion that the compensation which the Mussulman landlords will receive will more than cover the original price at which they obtained their lands; and that the high returns which they used to obtain before the recent war and annexation more than cover their entire loss of revenue since. This may be so, but it appears to me that it would be a poor excuse for the Servian Government to urge for fixing the present compensation much below the present value, or to decline to return the revenues actually derived from the lands since the annexation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Vice-Consul Baker to Mr. Locock.

Nisch, December 4, 1881.

Sir,

WITH regard to the Servian Agrarian Law and its administration, and the complaints of the Mussulman landlords in respect thereto, I have the honour to report as follows:—

1. The newly annexed territory contains a total area of about 4,250 square miles, or 2,720,000 acres = 10,625 square kilom., or 1,845,000 Servian "dayswork" ("jocks"), or about 13,000,000 Turkish "deunums" (a "deunum" is a square, measuring 40 ells on every side, and is equal to one-fifth of an acre). Of this total area about 2,500,000 deunums (or 500,000 acres) are under cultivation of a more or less primitive character; the remainder (about four-fifths) consists of—

(*a.*) The sites of towns and villages.
(*b.*) Public roads.
(*c.*) Public forests, formerly of great value, but now almost ruined by long mismanagement, or rather *non*-management.
(*d.*) Forests appertaining to communes and districts (numerous).
(*e.*) Forests claimed as appertaining to "tchifliks."
(*f.*) Commons of pasture appertaining to communes and districts (numerous).
(*g.*) Commons of pasture claimed to appertain to "tchifliks."
(*h.*) Mountain and other waste lands.

N.B.—The "cultivated" lands include what the Turkish Law calls "tchaïr," *i.e.*, land where the grass grows sufficiently high to be mowed, though such land would scarcely be classed as cultivated by European agriculturists.

2. According to the "tapous" issued by the Turkish Government, the great majority of the cultivated lands at the time of the annexation belonged to, or rather were "possessed" by, Mussulmans (but *vide* paragraph 19, *infra*). But the contention (to which you refer in your despatch of the 26th August last) that the tenures are almost without exception of ordinary freehold is wholly without foundation. At the time of the Turkish conquest the population was very sparse, and the only cultivated lands were to be found in the valleys in the neighbourhood of Vranja, Lescovatz, Kourshoumlya, Prokouplyé, Nisch, Ak-Palanka, and Pirot. These "cultivated" lands appear to have been divided pretty equally into two categories:—

(*a.*) "Uchriïé" appertained amongst the Ottoman conquerors, subject only to tithe.
(*b.*) "Kharadjiïé," which were left in possession of the Christians, subject to payment of a rent in money or in kind, equal to a certain proportion, not exceeding the half of the crop.

But the Sultan remained Lord Paramount of all the land, as well cultivated as uncultivated, and the Mussulman lands frequently reverted to the Crown by real or pretended escheats and forfeitures, and were regranted to new favourites. During the troubles with the Dahir and other Janissaries at the beginning of the present century the Mussulman lands in this district frequently changed hands by means of escheats and forfeitures. The Spahis, who at the time of their abolition, about forty years ago, enjoyed an important share of the annual profits of the land, were certainly not freeholders in the legal or ordinary sense of the term.

3. Notwithstanding that Ottoman legislation has been invariably in favour of the "timars," "ziamets," "multezims," "mouhassils," "tchiflikssahibis," and other landlords, the peasants have, as a rule, succeeded in retaining the actual possession of the great bulk of the cultivated land; and the reason is to be found in the Mussulman's disinclination for manual labour, and the consequent necessity of leaving the land in the possession of the peasants, with sufficient beneficial interest therein to enable them to exist. The Mussulmans explain this possession thus:—The peasants were originally day-labourers, and wandered from farm to farm, according to the fluctuations of the labour market, so that in busy times the Mussulman proprietors were bidding against each other and raising the price of labour to an extravagant figure, and ultimately found it to their interest to settle the labourers on the land by giving them half or even eight-tenths of the crop on part of the land, on condition of their working the remainder for nothing. But this explanation is so opposed to all historical facts that it can only be regarded as a clever theory. Two facts alone are sufficient to demolish it, viz.:—

(1.) Immediately after the conquest the bulk of the peasants held their lands on terms very similar to the present.

(2.) The present peasants have been cultivating the same land as their ancestors cultivated for generations.

4. Immediately after the Crimean war the Porte began to regulate the tenures and titles of the real property of the Empire, and the following Acts of Legislation affected the lands now subject to the Servian Agrarian Law, viz.:—

(*a.*) The Real Property Code of the 21st April, 1858.
(*b.*) Regulation as to tapous, 1859.
(*c.*) Instructions as to the exchange of old tapous for new ones, 1860.
(*d.*) Instructions for filling up the printed tabulated forms of the new tapous, 1860.
(*e.*) Law as to contracts of tenancy, 1867.
(*f.*) Instructions as to carrying out the regulations with regard to the tapous. (This document is undated, but as it refers to the Law as to the vilayets, it was probably promulgated about the same time, viz., 1867.)
(*g.*) Regulations as to sales by auction of State property, 1872.

5. As these Laws relate exclusively to State property, and as the Mussulman proprietors (with a very few exceptions) hold their lands in the newly-annexed territory by virtue of tapous issued under them, it is clear that their tenure bears a greater resemblance to copyhold than (as contended on behalf of the Mussulmans) to freehold. Indeed, the tenure has many of the incidents of copyhold, *e.g.*:—

(*a.*) The title is evidenced by a tapou strongly analogous to the "Copy of Court Roll."
(*b.*) The land is forfeitable on non-cultivation (Real Property Code, Articles 9, 68).
(*c.*) Sales can only be made by permission of the authorities (Code, Article 36).
(*d.*) Brick-earth is reserved (Code, Article 12), as also mines.

6. With regard to the instructions of 1860 as to the exchange of old tapous for new ones, it should be borne in mind that at that time the finances of the Porte were in a very unsatisfactory condition; and although these instructions were ostensibly issued for the sole purpose of ascertaining the rights of the proprietors (at the nominal cost of 3 piastres for the paper on which the new tapou was to be written and 1 piastre for making it out), still they contained clauses for raising revenue. And the peasants allege that these clauses were acted upon to their detriment; *e.g.*, Article 4 provides that if it be discovered that any one has taken possession of lands clandestinely, he may obtain a tapou on paying the value of the lands at the time of the occupation. The peasants say that in many instances they reclaimed worthless waste, and that their landlords, under this Article, obtained tapous for it by paying an inadequate sum, although, in point of fact, the reclaimed land belonged to them (the peasants), and the like with regard to Articles 5, 9, &c.

7. The peasants complain bitterly that the provisions of the Code as to possessory titles and the administration of those provisions operated most unjustly on their rights. Article 20 provides that undisputed possession for ten years shall confer a title; but Article 23 excludes tenants from this right, and provides that they cannot obtain a possessory title by any length of undisputed possession as against their landlords. The peasants allege that their reclamation of waste land has always been appropriated by their landlords under these clauses, by means of a rent nominal at first, but afterwards raised to the annual value of the reclaimed land.

8. The peasants also complain that they have been wronged in many cases under Article 8 of the Law as to Contracts of Tenancy, which provides that such contracts shall be renewed and registered every five years. They allege that they have been induced to accept such contracts containing the ancient conditions of their permanent tenure without knowing that they thereby limited their rights, previously permanent, to a period of five years, at the end of which time their rents have, in many instances, been raised.

9. It seems perfectly clear that the titles of most of the Mussulman proprietors are founded on the confiscation of the peasants' equitable rights, which confiscation has in most cases been rendered legal by the legislation of the Porte, always prompted by revenue necessities and a natural desire to protect to the utmost the interests of its Mussulman subjects. The interests of the Christian peasants have as systematically been neglected. But notwithstanding this fact, the peasants seem to be generally willing to accept (as to title) the *status quo* at the time of the annexation, and to pay to the lords compensation based on the actual amount of their rents and services at that period; and only very few titles have been formally impugned before the Law Courts (V, para. 21, *infra*).

10. The Porte's protest against Servia's right to abolish this tenure by tapou seems totally inconsistent with an admission of Servia's sovereign independence, and a knowledge of the pernicious influence of this tenure on "lord" and tenant, and on the community generally. It is infinitely more objectionable than tenure by copy of court-roll; it fosters deceit and hatred between the lords and the tenants, and its uncertainty discourages

agriculture to the detriment of the community. And having regard to the mutual hatred of the Mussulmans and Christians, the preservation of tenure by tapou seems to have been a moral impossibility. Servia has, too, the example of most European States, which have from time to time abolished feudal copyhold and similar tenures, all less objectionable than tenure by tapou.

11. Article 2 of the Servian Agrarian Law defines gospodarluk land to be such as the peasants have cultivated on paying the lord an annual fixed *redendum* in money or kind, or one-ninth of the produce of the land; but of which the lord had no right to change the tenant or *redendum*. This definition appears to have been drawn from Article 2 of the Ottoman Real Property Code, in which "Kharadjiié" is defined. (*Vide supra*, par. 2.)

12. Article 3 of the Agrarian Law defines tchifliks in almost the *ipsissima verba* of Article 131 of the Ottoman Code, and Article 4 defines colonized tchiflik.

13. Article 5 of the Agrarian Law enfranchises gospodarluk tenants of one year's standing, and Article 6 tchiflik tenants of ten years' standing. This difference in the length of time qualifying for enfranchisement is the main distinction (made by the Agrarian Law) between the two tenures, as the compensation for both is fixed on the same basis, viz., the annual value of the lord's rent; and although the Mussulman proprietors now allege their lands to be of tchiflik tenure, the argument has little practical value, as nearly all the tchiflik tenants are of over ten years' standing. (*Vide infra*, par. 20.) It is true that Article 28 of the Agrarian Law gives the tchiflik proprietors the right to retain their lands on selling to each tax-paying tenant five day's work (about 36 dennums, or 7 acres), at 20 fr., 10 fr., or 6 fr. per "day's work," according to the quality of the land, and on releasing to him (the tax-paying tenant) his house and garden. But in the only case I can hear of where the option given by this section has been claimed it had to be abandoned under the following circumstances. The proprietors tapou specified, as is usual, three times as many dennums as his estate actually contained, and when the tenants' 36 dennums a-piece came to be measured it was found that there was not enough land to satisfy their claims. On discovering that fact the landlord naturally abandoned. And here it may be remarked that the tapous are invariably grossly inaccurate as to the contents and boundaries of the properties to which they relate; so much so that it is often most difficult to identify the properties intended. Every estate, if judged by its alleged contents, overlaps the adjoining estates. Article 47 of the Ottoman Code seems to have favoured this confusion, but its origin is to be found in the exaggerations of the authorities on issuing tapous, and in the objection the Mussulmans appear to have to a measurement of the land.

14. Article 26 of the Agrarian Law fixes the price of enfranchisement of *redendu* in cash at seven years' purchase, and Article 27 fixes the price of *redendu* in kind at eight years' purchase. Taking into consideration that the current value of money in this district is 12 per cent. per annum, and the fact that the lords' titles are based on the confiscation, more or less gradual, of the tenants' equitable rights, this basis of price does not appear unreasonable. In fixing the annual value of the *redendu* difficulties have presented themselves, as the Mussulmans have invariably declined to produce their books, and the peasants have no books, and, moreover, now run down the value of the forced labour they had to do for the lord in order to reduce his compensation. On a question of value it is difficult to form an accurate opinion where the data, as in this case, are so conflicting, but I incline to the opinion that the Commissions have given the most weight to the evidence of the peasants, and that in some cases they have overlooked, to a certain extent, the evidence of the lords. But I can find no ground for the wholesale charges of injustice brought against the Commissions by the Mussulmans. The latter, considering themselves freeholders, naturally feel injured in being treated as "mesné" lords of copyholds, the beneficial interest in which is chiefly in the tenants, and hence their loud complaints.

15. The Mussulmans complain that private contracts under Article 13 of the Agrarian Act have been arbitrarily revoked by the Commission. The President of the Nisch Commission (lately returned from Lescovatz) corroborates what M. Marinovitch (who constituted the Commission of Control) told me in Prokuplié, on the 30th and 31st August last, viz., that the only private contracts annulled have been so annulled by reason of their purporting to include mountain-waste, forest, or pasturage, which were, under Turkish law, incapable of sale and purchase. This question does not appear to be entirely free from difficulty. Article 38 of the Servian Agrarian Law (founded apparently on Articles 97 and 98 of the Ottoman Code) exempts the mountain land, forests, and pastures from the operation of the law, on the ground that according to Turkish law the lords could not obtain tapous for them, and that they belonged in perpetuity to the

villages as common. But the draftesman of the Agrarian Law appears to have overlooked Article 99 of the Ottoman Code, which gives the tchiflik proprietors the sole right of pasture over the "tchiflik pastures," and prescribes that such pastures are to be held by ordinary tapou. These "tchiflik pastures" were no doubt originally encroachments from the common, but in view of Article 99 of the Ottoman Code it does not seem justifiable to include them in the operation of Article 38 of the Agrarian Law without proof of their being encroachments. But practically the question is not a large one, as there is no great quantity of land alleged to be "tchiflik pasture."

16. The most substantial of the Turkish grievances appears to be their complaints against Article 27 of the Agrarian Law, which Article empowers the Commission to allow the enfranchised tenant five years for payment by instalments of the enfranchisement money, he paying 6 per cent. per annum only. When the Agrarian Law was still under the consideration of the Skupschtina at Nisch (now nearly two years ago), I ventured to point out to the then Minister of Finance that this Article would work unfairly to the lords, besides protracting a difficult question which it was the interest of all parties to bring to a definite and final conclusion. His Excellency was good enough to admit the force of these remarks, but was unable to omit Article 27, because the peasants were too poor to pay cash, and the Government was not then prepared to negotiate a mortgage loan for paying off the enfranchisement money. Events have proved that my fears were only too well grounded; but as I have already (in my despatch of the 5th November last, and in previous despatches) entered fully into this question, it is unnecessary to enlarge on it here, especially as the present Government is, as I understand, about to negotiate a loan for the purpose of paying the enfranchisement money in cash.

17. It is perhaps well to mention here two questions raised on behalf of the Mussulman landlords with regard to the XXXIXth Article of the Berlin Treaty. My Turkish colleague, Nicolaïdes Effendi argues (1) that as all the Mussulman landlords wish to fix their residences outside the Principality, they have a right under the first paragraph of Article XXXIX to retain their real property, including tchiftliks. But the Servians reply that that paragraph refers only to "propriétés immeubles," *i.e.*, to freeholds, and not to mere rights of partial usufruct such as those of persons having constructive (and not actual) possession by tapou. To this Mussulman's rejoin (2) that if the tchiflik proprietors have the mere possession of their estates, the freehold must remain in the Sultan, and in that case comes as State property under the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article XXXIX of the Berlin Treaty. The Servians reply that this does not follow, as such last-mentioned paragraph only refers to vakouls, and to such State property as the Ottoman authorities had in actual and immediate possession or use, and not to the mere rights of a Lord Paramount. Otherwise (they argue) Servia might be called upon to purchase the whole 10,000 square kilom. contained in the annexed territory (for the Sultan was Lord Paramount of all), which could not possibly have been the intention of the Signatory Powers. Looking at the matter as one of the mere fact (to the exclusion of legal theories), the gospodarluk and tchiflik proprietors appear in this district to have formed a channel for the raising of annual and other revenue, rather than a body of real land proprietors.

18. Many of the Mussulman proprietors have produced, in evidence of their title, tapous issued by the Turkish authorities since the war. These tapous have been disputed on the ground that on the annexation the Turkish authorities lost all right to issue documents of title affecting property in the annexed territory; but the possessors of these new tapous answer this objection by the assertion that the new tapous are only duplicates obtained from the Ministry of Archives at Constantinople in the place of old tapous confiscated by the Servians at the capitulation of Nisch, and afterwards sold with other Turkish documents for "butter" paper. But a Servian gentleman who has lived several years in Constantinople, and had frequent occasion to visit the Ministry of Archives, assures me that the tapous Department is in such utter confusion (the documents being mixed together in large sacks), that it would be absolutely impossible to make out the large number of duplicates which have found their way to my Turkish colleague here, and to Zekki Effendi, the Secretary to the Turkish Vakouls Commissioner. For my own part, I am inclined to think that these duplicate tapous have been made out from the statements of the Turkish proprietors, and that they are even more inaccurate than the originals; but that Turkish documents were confiscated at the surrender of the fortress, and afterwards sold as waste paper, is an indisputable fact, for I myself have seen them used by trades-people as packing paper, though I do not recollect to have seen any tapous amongst such waste paper, a large proportion of which consisted of stamped paper for tabacco. The statement as to the unsatisfactory state of the tapou Department of the Ministry of Archives could, of course, be tested by a visit to that Department.

19. Some of the villages in the annexed territory had enfranchised their lands before the annexation, and so do not come within the scope of the Agrarian Law. In the department of Nisch there are fifty of such villages.

20. In the department of Nisch the Commission has found two cases only of colonized tchiflik held by peasants for a less period than ten years, the period qualifying for enfranchisement of colonized tchiflik under Article 6 of the Servian Agrarian Law (*vide supra*, par. 13).

21. In the department of Nisch only ten cases (out of a total of 220) have been referred to the Tribunals for decision of questions of title, which confirms what is stated (*supra*, par. 9) as to the willingness of the peasants to acknowledge as a rule the *statu quo* (as to title) at the time of the annexation. But not one of these cases has as yet been decided.

22. In the department of Nisch there are 220 estates coming under the Agrarian Law, but the extent of them has not been ascertained, the Commission having calculated the compensation for enfranchisement solely on the basis prescribed by Article 26 of the Agrarian Law, viz., the annual value of the lord's *redenda*. The total of such compensation for this department amounts to a little under 15,000,000 piastres (3,000,000 fr.), but of this sum only 5,100 piastres have been paid. As the department of Nisch is about two-sevenths of the whole annexed territory, the total enfranchisement money may be approximately estimated at 10,000,000 fr. As the causes of non-payment of the enfranchisement money are fully set out in my despatch of the 5th ultimo, it is unnecessary to enlarge on them here.

23. The investigation I have made of the local agrarian question during the last two years leads me to the opinion that, even assuming that the landlords obtained their tapous in a regular, legal, and just manner (which the tenants dispute) the amounts they paid for such tapous are more than covered by the compensation for enfranchisement payable under the Agrarian Act, and that the income they have lost during and since the war is also more than covered by the very high percentage their *redenda* paid before the war on their capital outlay (and, of course, it was not only landlords to whom the war brought pecuniary loss). It is true that there are individual cases where the lords will be losers, as, for instance, where the grantee of a tapou of waste land, issued gratis, got the land cultivated by peasants and then sold his "tchiflik" to a third person for hard cash. The purchaser in such a case will probably find his compensation for enfranchisement less than his purchase-money. But the peasants would naturally contend that he bought the results of their labour from one who had not paid for it, and that it is from his vendor and not from them that he should seek compensation. From what passed in a recent conversation I had with M. Karnkostitch, the President of the Nisch Commission, he appears to entertain this view, and probably it is this view which has influenced some of the decisions the Commission has arrived at, and which the Mussulmans denounce as confiscation of property bought and paid for. The truth is, that the Servian Agrarian Law, like the Irish Land Law, works hardships in some individual cases, but its confiscations, if such they may be called, are chiefly of "rights" founded on confiscation. The peasants naturally consider the present so-called confiscation a mere tardy and partial restitution.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. BAKER.

No. 42.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(*Received December 26.*)

(No. 1126. Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 20, 1881.

My Lord,

IT having been currently reported in Constantinople that Ali Nizami Pasha had exaggerated the splendour of his reception at Berlin, I asked the German Chargé d'Affaires what were the real facts of the case. M. de Hirschfeldt told me that every possible honour had been shown to the Representative of His Majesty both by the Emperor and by Prince Bismarck, but that these ceremonies had no political significance whatsoever, and that there was nothing which Turkey could offer Germany to make it worth her while to incur the jealousy and suspicion of other Powers by entering into any compromising engagements with her.

M. de Hirschfeldt then enlarged upon the benefit which would accrue both to Turkey and to civilization generally if European officials, whether from Germany or elsewhere, were

to be introduced into the civil and military administration of Turkey. "In fact," concluded his Excellency, "we have said to Turkey that before we can talk of an alliance she must reorganize herself, and that until she gets her fleet and army into proper order she would be useless to anybody."

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

No. 43.

Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)

E
(No. 481. Secret.)

My Lord, *Berlin, December 20, 1881.*

SINCE writing my despatch No. 468 of the 14th instant, in which I reported my impression to your Lordship that Prince Bismarck might some day yield to the Sultan's importunities, and listen with more complacency than heretofore to His Majesty's solicitations for advice and moral support, that impression has been confirmed to me by Prince Bismarck himself.

Yesterday evening Prince Bismarck asked me to call on him to tell me that the Turkish emissaries, Ali Nizami Pasha and Reschid Bey, who had brought diamond stars to Berlin and had asked for gold in return, which he did not, however, think they would find the Berlin capitalists much tempted to lend them, had also asked him, he said, for protection against their protectors, who, with the sole exception of Germany, in their opinion, wanted "to cut slices out of their skin," and press advice upon them for their so-called good, which, if adopted, would, they declared, hasten on the downfall of the Turkish Empire. The Sultan in his distress, they said, appealed, therefore, first for protection and moral support to Germany, as the only disinterested Power among them, to save him from his friends; and, secondly, for practical advice, in the shape of German officers and officials to improve his army and to regulate the various branches of his Administration; in return for which the Sultan, through them, offered his alliance, offensive and defensive, to the German Emperor.

Prince Bismarck said, in reply, that he had begun by reminding them that he had already lent the Sultan some German officials to reform certain branches of their Administration, and he would also lend them officials to improve the administration of their army, but he would not lend them any officers to serve in their army, first, because they had plenty of excellent officers of almost every nation in Europe who could drill their troops; and, secondly, because the best German officers would not consent to serve in Turkey, and bad ones would be of no use to them.

To this, Prince Bismarck told me, Ali Nizami had modestly observed, with downcast eyes, that the worst German officers would still be infinitely better than the best Turkish officers, an observation which I could perceive had gratified the German Chancellor beyond measure.

He had then asked Ali Nizami what was meant by an alliance with Germany. He had read in the newspapers* that the Sultan flattered himself that, by joint action with Germany in the event of war with France, he could recover his suzerainty over Tunis; and if that were really the case, the Sultan was indulging in dreams that could never be realized.

To this query, Prince Bismarck observed to me, he had fully expected an eloquent denial on the part of the Pasha of the newspaper reports he had alluded to, but Ali Nizami was silent and made no reply, as if he could not deny that his master the Sultan really thought so.

Prince Bismarck then solemnly declared to him that Germany would never attack France unless attacked herself or seriously threatened, and would never "fire a cartridge for Turkey" under any conditions whatever.

Turkey must be content to hold her own and make the best of what she had, and any attempt to recover what she had already lost would, in his opinion, be suicidal to the Ottoman Empire. He considered Tunis to be lost to the Sultan for ever, and if His Majesty went to war to recover Tunis and protect Tripoli, Germany would remain strictly neutral. He did not himself for one moment believe that France had any designs on Tripoli, a sandy desert she did not covet; but if the Sultan seriously feared for Tripoli,

* *Vide* "Times" of December 16, 1881.

why not ask England to propose to the Powers interested a joint guarantee, which would relieve the Sultan of all further anxiety?

This ended their first interview; but the Sultan's Envoys, Prince Bismarck said, had requested to see him once more to take leave, and before receiving them he wished to tell me, for your Lordship's information, what they had come to say, and what he proposed to reply to the Sultan through them. He begged I would correct him if he in any way misinterpreted what he believed to be the Eastern policy of Her Majesty's Government. He would tell them that the Sultan was mistaken in not placing implicit reliance in the good faith and friendly advice of England, who was Turkey's best friend, and with whom he wished to act at all times in harmony and cordial concert.

Germany was allied with Austria and Russia, and he could answer for it that Austria would be a friendly neighbour to Turkey, whilst the present Emperor of Russia was a peace-loving man, who wished to improve the internal administration of his own Empire, and had no temptations, like his father, to go to war with Turkey. General Ignatieff had not influence enough to alter his Imperial master's peaceful policy, so that Turkey had nothing to fear for the present from Russia.

What France might do no one could foretell, but he believed that Tunis was as much as she could digest, and that her appetite would not extend to Tripoli.

The Eastern policy of England he believed to be based on the absolute necessity to keep the road to India free, the earnest desire to maintain the political *status quo* in Turkey, in Asia, and in Egypt, and the philanthropic wish to improve the material condition of the Sultan's subjects. His Majesty had, therefore, every reason to confide and rely in the policy of England, whilst Germany had every reason to support that policy, because it was conducive to the maintenance of peace and order in Europe.

He looked upon the breaking up of the Turkish Empire as so great a danger to Europe, that he was prepared to go great lengths to keep it together, at least as long as he lived himself, for what happened after his death he had no means of controlling, and as the Turks, as a military nation, had proved themselves to be the race best able to keep order among the various nationalities composing the Empire, he would support the Turkish Government for the sake of keeping the Empire together.

In regard to Egypt, he also agreed with England, that the *status quo* should be maintained, and he thought England right to resist the interference of any other Power in Egypt, and he held that England would be justified in going to war to resist any foreign interference with Egypt, and if ever he should be consulted about a foreign occupation of Egypt, he would give his opinion in favour of a Turkish occupation, and would object to any other but a Turkish garrison for Egypt.

He agreed in all points with the policy of England, except in one, and that was, the philanthropic side of her policy. He believed that pressure for reforms could be overdone, and actually did more harm than good, because the irritation produced on the Turkish mind by high foreign pressure manifested itself by increased procrastination, and led to the very result it was so desirable to obviate.

He could, therefore, not give his support to a policy of pressure for reforms, and believed that better results could be obtained by leaving the Sultan alone, and giving the Pashas time to reflect on the advice already tendered by the Powers since the Congress of Berlin, which, he flattered himself, had really laid the foundation of lasting peace in Turkey.

I thanked Prince Bismarck for his friendly communication, and said that he had rightly interpreted our policy in regard to the road to India, and the maintenance of the political *status quo* in Turkey, Asia, and Egypt; but that we could never cease to press for reforms in Turkey, and for the improvement of the condition of the Sultan's subjects, because we knew from experience that if we ever relaxed our efforts, the Ottoman Administration would become more corrupt, and the condition of the people more abject and hopeless than it was even now, as he might learn, for instance, from our Blue Books on Armenia.

I therefore took this opportunity of renewing to him my earnest appeal to Count Hatzfeldt, that he would urge the Sultan, through his emissaries, Ali and Reschid, to send, without further delay, a Governor-General to Armenia, with full powers to improve the condition of the people, as recommended by Lord Dufferin and his colleagues.

Prince Bismarck, as your Lordship has seen from my despatch No. 481 of this day's date, showed himself decidedly opposed to interference, and declined, for his own part, to worry the Sultan by further pressure for improvements, which, he maintained, did more harm than good. He could not but feel favourably impressed, he said, by the tone and manner of Ali Nizami, a real old soldier, and a worthy representative of an old Anatolian

family of warriors, who had served the Sultans and massacred Christians in the name of the Prophet for five centuries.

Young Reschid appeared very intelligent, and the Sultan had given proof of discrimination in selecting him to accompany Ali Nizami to Berlin.

Prince Bismarck went on to say that the Sultan was a man of character, who knew what he wanted, and how to be master in his own house, and that eternally to lecture such a character was tantamount to humiliating him before his servants and subjects, and alienating him from his true friends. To press for administrative reforms, which the Turks had not the capacity to carry out, being a military nation and nothing else, was simply playing the Russian game and breaking up the Turkish Empire.

After some further conversation on other subjects I took my leave of Prince Bismarck, and, in passing through his ante-chamber, saw that Reschid Bey was already waiting to be received.

The impression left on my mind by this conversation with the German Chancellor is that, after long years of indifference to Eastern affairs, as alien to German interests, he has, under the influence of his new Foreign Secretary, Count Hatzfeldt, who is a philo-Turk, been induced to lend an ear to the Sultan's flattering assurances of implicit confidence, and unceasing solicitations for advice, with a view to future contingencies, when His Majesty's unsought-for submission may be turned to account to strengthen the influence and swell the voice of the German Chancellor in the European concert.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AMPTHILL.

No. 44.

Sir E. Thornton to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26.)

E
(No. 590. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 21, 1881.*

I HAVE been informed by one of my colleagues of a report which he has heard, though he has no means of ascertaining its truth, that Count Kalnoky, before he finally left St. Petersburgh, had agreed with M. de Giers upon the Project of a Protocol which was to be submitted to the Austrian Government for their consideration, with a view to a definitive sanction of its contents by this Empire and Austria.

According to my colleague's statement, this Protocol consisted of several Articles to the following effect: but he did not pretend to know that, even if such a Project had ever been discussed, the tenour of it, as given to him, was correct:—

1. The two Governments agreed that the authorization granted by the Treaty of Berlin that Austria should occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina should be permanent.

2. That the complete independence of Servia and Montenegro should be secured.

3. That efforts should be used to establish the union of the different railways mentioned in the Treaty of Berlin.

4. That measures should be taken to secure the free navigation of the Danube, so as not to prejudice the interests of the Riverain States.

5. That the independence of Roumania should be secured, and that all revolutionary tendencies should be suppressed.

6. That all possible assistance should be given to Bulgaria to consolidate her Government in a Conservative point of view, and that in the event of its finally becoming inevitable that this Principality should be united with Roumelia, the union should, if possible, be effected without commotion on the part of the neighbouring Powers and without revolution.

7. That endeavours should be made to suppress anarchy in Albania by means of municipal organizations, in accordance with the reasonable views of the population.

8. That the two Governments should oppose all ambitious views on the part of all other Powers with regard to the Peninsula.

9. That in the event of serious complications arising which might jeopardize the safety of communication through the Peninsula and across the Straits, and the preservation of good order in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, measures of protection should be taken by the two Governments.

10. That the Suez Canal and Egypt should be protected by the guarantee of the Great Powers.

11. That Germany should be invited to take cognizance of the contents of this Project of a Protocol, and should take part in their discussion.

12. That the development and modifications which may be introduced by the force of circumstances in the order of things as established by the Treaty of Berlin should be submitted to the consideration of the Signatory Powers.

Before seeing my colleague above referred to, I had heard that some agreement had been arrived at and signed by Count Kalnoky and M. de Giers, and I asked the latter whether it was so. He positively denied that anything had been signed between them, though he admitted that he had had a good deal of conversation with Count Kalnoky, and added that he was much pleased with the views he had expressed. He said that there was no need of any agreement with Austria, for that Russia held to the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin. Referring to the recruiting which had been carried out by the Austrian authorities in Bosnia, Count Kalnoky had said that it had been done for the purpose of forming a militia for the internal protection of the province, which Austria, as occupying the country, was bound to secure. But M. de Giers admitted that he believed that the occupation, which he considered was intended by the Treaty of Berlin to be provisional, would become permanent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. THORNTON.

No. 45.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 26, 11 P.M.)

(No. 451.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 26, 1881, 6:30 P.M.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that the Porte has received direct information from St. Petersburgh that a secret agreement of nine Articles had been concluded between Russia and Austria, having for its object the partition of the Balkan peninsula; and that when the Turkish Ambassador questioned M. de Giers on the subject, he did not absolutely deny the truth of the statement.

No. 46.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Earl Granville.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 26.)
My Lord, *Prevesa, December 17, 1881.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for the information of your Lordship, copy of my despatch No. 35 of to-day, and of its inclosure, to the Earl of Dufferin, relating to the manner in which the provincial authorities appear to be carrying out the orders of the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs with respect to the suppression of brigandage in Epirus, as mentioned in Lord Dufferin's despatch No. 952 of the 29th October last to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 46.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to the Earl of Dufferin.

My Lord, *Prevesa, December 17, 1881.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch, dated 29th October last, reporting to Earl Granville that the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs had promised to your Excellency that he would cause "immediate orders to be sent to the authorities to spare no effort to disperse the numerous bands of brigands who render life and property so insecure in the interior of Epirus," I have the honour to inclose, for the information of your Excellency, translation of Mr. Kypriotis' despatch of the 6th instant, which goes far to show the character of one at least of those persons whom the provincial authorities, acting no doubt in obedience to the above-mentioned orders from the Ottoman Minister,

have selected for the purpose of pursuing brigands, and, consequently, the restoration of public security.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 46.

Mr. Kypriotis to Vice-Consul Blakeney.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Janina, December* 6, 1881.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that a month since the well-known Mustafa Pronio, of Paramithia, on pretence of pursuing the brigand chief Stavraki, but prompted by a desire to avenge himself especially on the inhabitants of Seliani, with whom he had come to hands on a former occasion, entered with his "Palikars" the villages of Seliani, Lambanista, and Plakita, committed all sorts of violence on the women and children, and sent the men in crowds to the prisons of Paramithia and Janina.

It is to be regretted that the Local Administration approves his conduct.

The inhabitants of the above-mentioned villages have sent a petition, copy of which I think it useless to forward to you, giving an account of their sufferings, to the various Consulates.

For the sake of humanity, one could make friendly representations on the subject to the Vali, but I consider it superfluous, for whatever remedy he might suggest, practically he would do nothing.

I am, &c.
(Signed) B. KYPRIOTIS.

No. 47.

M. Coumoundouros to M. Gennadius.—(*Communicated to Earl Granville by M. Gennadius, December* 29.)

Monsieur, *Athènes le* $\frac{17}{29}$ *Décembre*, 1881.

VOUS connaissez déjà, par mes dépêches télégraphiques, la fermeture de nos bureaux de poste en Turquie. La Sublime Porte, se faisant un mauvais prétexte de la suppression du bureau de poste Turc à Larisse, effectuée lors de l'installation des autorités Helléniques en cette ville, s'est arrogé le droit d'user, de ce chef, de représailles contre la Grèce. Après avoir exigé la fermeture des bureaux de poste Helléniques, fonctionnant dans l'Empire Ottoman au même titre que les bureaux similaires des autres Puissances Européennes, elle a fait exécuter par la force une mesure à laquelle le Gouvernement du Roi ne pouvait consentir sans se déposséder de son propre gré des avantages du traitement de la nation la plus favorisée, accordé à la Grèce par le Traité de Caulidgia. Le Gouvernement Hellénique, en pleine conscience des droits que devait lui assurer dans une question d'intérêt général, la solidarité existant entre les Puissances Européennes en Turquie, s'est adressé aux Cabinets de l'Europe, en les priant de vouloir bien exercer à Constantinople leur haute autorité, dans le but de faire revenir la Porte sur une décision injustifiable, et de vider ainsi un incident, dont les suites pourraient influencer d'une manière désagréable les relations amicales qui existent entre la Grèce et la Turquie.

Malheureusement, à en juger par l'attitude que le Gouvernement Ottoman continue de garder en cette occurrence regrettable, l'action des Ambassadeurs des Grandes Puissances à Constantinople ne s'est pas encore fait sentir sur le Divan. Loin de paraître disposé à rapporter la mesure qu'elle a prise, la Sublime Porte semble, au contraire, vouloir la justifier aux yeux de l'Europe. En alléguant que le droit d'entretenir des bureaux de poste ne découla d'aucun engagement pris par la Turquie envers les Puissances Européennes, le Gouvernement Ottoman prétend que le traitement de la nation la plus favorisée ne pourrait être applicable à la Grèce dans le cas dont il s'agit. Répondant à la protestation, que M. Coundouriotis a été invité d'adresser au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la Porte contre la fermeture de nos bureaux, Assim Pacha déclare que la mesure prise par le Gouvernement Ottoman lui a été dictée par le sentiment de sa dignité et de son droit; que la Sublime Porte n'a eu recours à cette extrémité qu'après avoir en vain tâché de la prévenir; et que c'est le Gouvernement Hellénique qui l'a provoquée, en faisant fermer par la force la poste Ottomane de Larisse, pendant que des pourparlers étaient entamés à ce sujet entre les deux Cabinets.

[This should follow No. 47, on page 37.]

No. 47*.

M. Coumoundouros to M. Gennadius.—(*Communicated to Earl Granville by M. Gennadius, December* 29.)

Monsieur, *Athènes, le* $\frac{17}{29}$ *Décembre*, 1881.

L'ARTICLE XIII de la Convention conclue le $\frac{2 \text{ Juin}}{6 \text{ Juillet}}$ dernier, entre la Grèce et la Turquie, ainsi que l'Article correspondant de l'Acte stipulé le $\frac{13}{25}$ Mai, entre les Ambassadeurs des Grandes Puissances à Constantinople et le Gouvernement Ottoman, portent que les individus originaires des territoires cédés à la Grèce ou actuellement domiciliés dans ces provinces auront la faculté d'opter, dans un délai de trois ans, entre la nationalité Ottomane et la naturalisation Hellénique.

Le Gouvernement du Roi, devant procéder au recensement de la population des territoires nouvellement acquis à la Grèce et faire déterminer en même temps le nombre des citoyens Hellènes, qui, selon les dispositions de la loi fondamentale du Royaume, auraient le droit de se faire représenter dans le sein du Parlement Hellénique, s'est adressé à cet effet aux autorités administratives instituées dans les nouvelles provinces. En même temps il invitait les Consuls de la Grèce, établis à l'étranger, à faire le recensement des individus originaires des provinces annexées, qui se trouveraient domiciliés dans les circonférences respectives de leur juridiction Consulaire et qui voudraient opter pour la nationalité Hellénique.

En agissant ainsi le Gouvernement Hellénique s'en tenait strictement aux termes clairs et explicites de l'Article XIII de la Convention du $\frac{2 \text{ Juin}}{6 \text{ Juillet}}$, qui accordait le droit à la subjection Hellénique, non seulement aux individus domiciliés dans les nouvelles provinces du Royaume, mais encore à tous ceux qui en étaient originaires. Il ne croyait point qu'une interprétation quelconque de l'Article précité, si ingénieuse qu'elle fût, pût contester ce droit à des Hellènes d'origine, de langue, et de religion, lesquels, pour avoir établi leur domicile hors des territoires annexés à la Grèce, n'en étaient pas moins des Thessaliens et Épirotes.

Malheureusement, la Sublime Porte, qui, depuis quelque temps, semble avoir pris à tâche de créer des difficultés à la Grèce, et de provoquer des complications, qui ne finiront certes pas par consolider les relations amicales des deux États, a vu dans l'action de nos Consuls, établis dans l'Empire Ottoman, un acte illégal et contraire à la lettre de l'Article XIII, sus-indiqué. Le recensement entrepris par eux des individus originaires des nouvelles provinces, qui voulaient opter pour la nationalité Hellénique, l'admission de ceux-ci à prêter le serment de citoyen Hellène, et la protection Hellénique, qui leur était accordée par nos Consuls, à la suite de leur naturalisation, ont été, aux yeux du Gouvernement Ottoman, autant d'actes arbitraires, qui n'auraient leur source que dans une interprétation erronée de l'Article XIII. Cet Article ne viserait, selon la seule interprétation juste que la Porte entend lui donner, que les habitants du territoire annexé qui y seraient nés ou domiciliés; en d'autres termes, les habitants des nouvelles provinces, qui y sont nés ou les habitent. Inutile de démontrer ce qu'il y a d'impossible dans cette interprétation d'un texte qui n'en a pas besoin.

La Légation Royale à Constantinople a fait valoir auprès de la Porte toutes les raisons qui militaient contre sa manière de voir dans cette question. Le Gouvernement Turc n'en a pas moins cru devoir y persister. Par une note verbale, datée du 3 Octobre, le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la Turquie vient de déclarer à M. Coundouriotis que la Sublime Porte a recommandé à tous les Gouvernements généraux de ne permettre à aucun individu, qui, quoique originaire du territoire cédé à la Grèce, se trouve établi dans l'Empire, de se soustraire à son autorité légitime et aux devoirs de sujet Ottoman.

Devant cette obstination injustifiable de la Sublime Porte, et les mesures qu'elle vient de prendre à l'égard des nouveaux sujets du Royaume, le Gouvernement du Roi se trouve dans la nécessité de faire appel à la justice de vues des Cabinets des Grandes Puissances, et de soumettre à leur haute appréciation un incident qui ne manquerait pas d'engendrer des conflits désagréables entre les Consuls Helléniques établis dans l'Empire Ottoman et les autorités locales. Le Gouvernement Royal espère que les Grandes Puissances voudront bien faire accepter au Gouvernement Turc la seule interprétation que l'Article XIII puisse comporter, et l'engager à révoquer les ordres qu'elle a donnés à ses Gouverneurs.

Elles épargneront ainsi à la Grèce la nécessité de voir dans la conduite du Gouvernement Ottoman une violation du Traité du $\frac{20 \text{ Juin}}{2 \text{ Juillet}}$, et de régler, en conséquence, son action dans l'avenir.

Je vous prie de vouloir bien donner lecture de la présente à son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, et de lui en laisser copie, s'il le demande.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) A. COUMOUNDOUROS.

Vous savez, par ma dépêche du $\frac{30 \text{ Novembre}}{12 \text{ Décembre}}$, que cette dernière assertion du Gouvernement Turc n'est rien moins que fondée. Les bureaux de poste Turcs existant, avant l'annexion, à Larisse, à Arta, et à Tricala, ont été fermés aussitôt après l'occupation de ces villes par l'armée Hellénique. Les Directions postales Ottomanes de ces endroits se sont rendues, en cette occasion, aux représentations, très justes d'ailleurs, de nos autorités. Aucune mesure de violence n'a été appliquée. Le Gouvernement Ottoman n'a fait aucune objection contre la fermeture des bureaux d'Arta et de Tricala, ni n'est entré en pourparlers avec le Gouvernement Royal, avant la suppression de celui de Larisse, pour obtenir une concession, qui, d'ailleurs, n'aurait pu lui être accordée. Ce n'est que plus tard que la Légation Ottomane à Athènes faisait des démarches auprès du Gouvernement Royal pour la réouverture du bureau de poste de Larisse. Si le Gouvernement du Roi y a répondu, à son grand regret, par un refus, c'est que les lois du Royaume ne lui permettaient pas d'agir autrement.

Quant à l'allégation de la Porte, que le Gouvernement Ottoman n'a jamais pris d'engagement autorisant les Puissances Européennes à entretenir des bureaux de poste en Turquie, et que par conséquent la Grèce ne pouvait se prévaloir, en cette occasion, du traitement de la nation la plus favorisée, nous ne pouvons mieux y répondre qu'en mentionnant le Règlement Ottoman pour les objets passibles de Douane, arrivant par la poste Impériale et Royale Austro-Hongroise, daté du $\frac{1}{13}$ Juillet, 1870. Ce Règlement, qui, d'après les termes de l'Article 9, est applicable, tant à Constantinople que dans les autres villes de l'Empire, où existe une poste Austro-Hongroise, reconnaît formellement à l'Autriche-Hongrie le droit d'avoir des bureaux de poste en Turquie; il fait plus; il règle le service de ces bureaux dans leurs relations avec les autorités Douanières Ottomanes. Aussi la Porte n'aurait-elle aucune raison spécieuse pour refuser à la Grèce ce qu'elle a accordé et qu'elle accorde encore aujourd'hui à une autre Puissance Européenne.

Ces explications suffiront, j'espère, pour démontrer que la mesure prise et exécutée par la Porte ne pourrait avoir aucune justification.

En nous adressant de nouveau aux Grandes Puissances, et en les priant de vouloir bien prendre cette question en considération sérieuse, et l'envisager sous son point de vue Européen, nous aurions à croire qu'elles voudront bien donner à leurs Représentants à Constantinople les instructions nécessaires, afin d'amener la Porte, par une démarche commune et énergique, à rapporter une mesure qui ne pourrait être maintenue sans compromettre gravement les relations des deux États.

Vous voudrez bien donner lecture de la présente à son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères et lui en laisser copie, s'il la demande.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) A. COUMOUNDOUROS.

No. 48.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to Earl Granville by Musurus Pasha, December* 29.)

E

Sublime Porte, le 20 *Décembre,* 1881.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

DANS une requête qu'ils viennent de présenter à la Sublime Porte, les émigrés Musulmans de la Bulgarie exposent toutes les difficultés qu'ils ont rencontrées, et rencontrent encore, de la part des autorités Bulgares, et dont le résultat se traduit pour eux par l'impossibilité de régler leurs affaires d'immeubles dans le délai de trois ans. Les pétitionnaires font ressortir combien il serait nécessaire de prolonger ce terme, qui touche à sa fin. J'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, sous ce pli, pour plus ample information, une copie de la dite requête.

Les faits dont se plaignent les pauvres émigrés sont d'une vérité frappante. Ce qu'ils ont eu à souffrir jusqu'ici de la part d'autorités et de populations acharnées contre eux rend tout commentaire superflu.

Je me borne donc à prier votre Excellence d'entretenir le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique de la démarche dont il s'agit. Nous ne doutons point qu'il ne veuille bien, dans ses sentiments d'équité, se prêter à une entente propre à sauvegarder les droits méconnus et les intérêts compromis des émigrés Musulmans de la Bulgarie.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) M. ASSIM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 48.

Petition presented to the Sublime Porte and signed by Twenty-two Emigrants from Sophia.

(Traduction.)

ANCIENS habitants de Sophia, nous avons émigré pendant la dernière guerre dans une autre partie de l'Empire pour nous soustraire à l'oppression des Bulgares.

Conformément au Traité de Berlin, nous avons envoyé en Bulgarie des fondés de pouvoirs pour prendre possession de nos biens. Malheureusement les autorités Bulgares, dont le plus grand désir est de nous priver de nos droits incontestables, font naître sous mille prétextes des difficultés insurmontables.

Nous apprenons par nos agents en Bulgarie que les autorités Bulgares viennent de déclarer officiellement que, d'après le Traité de Berlin, les Musulmans devraient réclamer leurs biens dans l'espace de trois ans, et qu'à l'expiration de ce délai aucune réclamation de cette nature ne serait prise en considération. Il est inutile de faire ressortir les fâcheux effets de l'insuffisance d'un délai aussi court qui passera si vite qu'il nous sera impossible de rien faire, et aura dès lors pour conséquence de nous priver de nos droits légitimes.

En effet, plusieurs orphelins et vieillards n'ont pu, à cause des grandes distances, se présenter jusqu'ici aux autorités Bulgares, et nous n'avons pu depuis six mois faire légaliser nos documents par l'Agence de la Principauté à Constantinople. Comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, les actes des autorités Bulgares ont uniquement pour but de nous créer des difficultés en vue de nous faire perdre du temps et de nous dépouiller ensuite de nos biens. C'est ainsi que tantôt elles dissolvent la Commission chargée de régler les affaires de nos propriétés, tantôt elles méconnaissent nos "tapous."

En présence de ces difficultés et d'un délai aussi court, il nous est, nous le répétons, absolument impossible de régler nos affaires et d'affirmer nos droits, et cet état de choses nous anéantira complètement.

Dans la conviction que votre Altesse appréciera la légitimité de nos plaintes, nous la prions de vouloir bien faire au plus tôt les démarches nécessaires auprès des Puissances en vue d'obtenir la prolongation du délai en question de trois années.

Constantinople, le $\frac{5}{17}$ *Novembre*, 1881

Inclosure 2 in No. 48.

Petition presented to the Sublime Porte by Bulgarian Emigrants.

(Traduction.)

VOULANT arracher des mains des Bulgares nos biens qui sont restés en Bulgarie, et en prendre possession, soit en personne, soit par nos fondés de pouvoirs, nous avons présenté, il y a huit mois, conformément à l'usage en vigueur en Bulgarie, et, après avoir rempli toutes les formalités requises à cet effet, la pétition ci-jointe à l'Agence de la Bulgarie à Constantinople pour être légalisée; mais cette Agence se refuse à reconnaître la légalisation du Bureau des Provinces Privilégiées, et elle exige celle du Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères.

N'ayant pu, par suite de ce refus de l'Agence de la Principauté, prendre possession de nos biens qui se trouvent dans un état de ruine, nous manquons de termes pour exposer tous les préjudices que nous cause cet état de choses, dont la continuation amènera notre ruine complète.

Nous prions votre Altesse de prendre en pitié notre malheureuse situation, et de faire légaliser les documents en question par l'Agence de la Bulgarie.

Constantinople, le $\frac{17}{29}$ *Novembre*, 1881.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) IBRAHIM.
ISMAÏL.
HADIDJÉ.
FATMA.
MEHMED.
DURIÉ.

No. 49.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to Earl Granville by Musurus Pasha, December 29.)

Sublime Porte, le 22 Décembre, 1881.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

PAR mes dépêches Circulaires en date des 18 Octobre et 17 Novembre derniers, j'avais entretenu votre Excellence des difficultés soulevées par les autorités Bulgares.

Quelques-uns des Cabinets ayant exprimé le désir de nous voir spécifier des faits à l'appui de nos réclamations, je vous transmets, ci-joint, un Mémoire récapitulant sommairement nos principaux griefs contre les autorités Princières.

En vous priant de communiquer cette pièce au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, je saisis, &c.

(Signé) M. ASSIM.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Memorandum respecting Brigandage in Macedonia.

LA Sublime Porte, émue des déprédations et des crimes que des bandes de brigands, formées en Bulgarie, venaient perpétrer dans les provinces voisines de la Principauté, n'a cessé, depuis deux ans, de demander le concours du Gouvernement Princier en vue d'une action combinée ayant pour objet de mettre fin à cette situation. Malheureusement, toutes les propositions faites dans ce but ont été écartées par le Gouvernement Bulgare au grand avantage des bandits qui, pourchassés par les troupes Impériales, s'enfuient au delà de la ligne de démarcation où ils sont sûrs de trouver un refuge et de rester impunis.

Le Gouvernement Impérial se voit ainsi placé devant l'alternative ou de forfaire à l'obligation de défendre ses populations contre les attaques des brigands, ou bien de faire poursuivre ces derniers par ses troupes au delà de la ligne de démarcation. Les autorités Bulgares paraissent vouloir pousser les choses à l'extrême par leur refus obstiné de se prêter à l'entente que le mal signalé exige impérieusement, et que la sécurité et la tranquillité communes des provinces voisines conseillent.

Caisses des Orphelins de la Principauté.

Le Commissaire Impérial à Sophia s'est adressé à plusieurs reprises au Gouvernement Bulgare pour faire valoir les réclamations des Musulmans émigrés, domiciliés en Turquie, en restitution des quotes-parts qui leur sont dues par les Caisses des Orphelins de la Principauté. Nonobstant les assurances données par le Gouvernement Bulgare comme quoi le montant de ces quotes-parts serait envoyé au Cheikh-ul-Islamat, malgré toutes les nouvelles démarches faites par le Commissaire Impérial auprès des autorités Bulgares à ce sujet, la question reste toujours en suspens, au grand préjudice des malheureux orphelins Musulmans émigrés de la Bulgarie qui, depuis bientôt quatre ans, ne peuvent recouvrer ni leur capital, pour le faire fructifier ailleurs, ni même les intérêts, qui forment leur unique moyen de subsistance.

Institution d'un Bureau Spécial placé sous la direction du Grand Chancelier du Divan Impérial.

Agents commerciaux Ottomans en Bulgarie.

Transformation du Yali Djamisé en dépôt d'armes.

Conscrits réfractaires et déserteurs Ottomans en Bulgarie.

Refus de reconnaître les légalisations du Bureau Spécial.

(Ces diverses questions sont traitées longuement dans les notes Circulaires antérieures du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères.)

Affaire des Passeports et Permis de Route.

En vertu du Règlement sur les passeports, toute personne voyageant dans l'intérieur de l'Empire est tenue de se munir d'un permis de route ("mourour-teskéressi"). Au mépris de cette prescription formelle, les ressortissants de la Principauté de Bulgarie, voyageant dans l'intérieur de la Turquie, refusent de s'y conformer. Sur l'invitation de la Sublime Porte, le Commissaire Ottoman à Sophia s'est adressé à plusieurs reprises au Gouvernement Princier pour demander qu'il fût mis un terme à cette situation irrégulière; mais toutes les démarches faites à cet effet sont demeurées infructueuses, malgré les assurances données par les autorités Bulgares.

Protestation contre la démolition des Propriétés de l'Etat.

Avant que la Commission Turco-Bulgare prévue par l'Article XII du Traité de Berlin ait terminé les travaux qui lui incombent par rapport aux propriétés de l'État dans la Principauté, les autorités Bulgares ont commencé à les démolir ou à se les approprier. Les protestations faites par la Sublime Porte contre cette façon d'agir injustifiable n'ont pas empêché les autorités Bulgares de persévérer dans la voie arbitraire où elles se sont engagées.

Démolition de Mosquées, Médressés, et autres Propriétés Vacoufs.

Au mois de Mars 1880, à la suite de la démolition du Médressé de Sakally Ahmed Agha, le Commissaire Impérial à Sophia avait adressé une protestation formelle au Gouvernement Bulgare. Depuis, Nihad Pacha avait fait une nouvelle protestation générale contre toute destruction de propriétés, tant de celles appartenant à l'État que de celles faisant partie du vacouf. Mais ces protestations demeurent infructueuses, et pas plus tard que le mois d'Août suivant, les autorités Bulgares faisaient démolir l'école vacouf dite "Tach Mekteb," sise à Sophia.

No. 50.

M. J. Ghika to Earl Granville.—(Received December 29.)

E

My Lord,

Londres, le 28 Décembre, 1881.

DANS une conversation qui a eu lieu à Constantinople entre son Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre et le Représentant de la Roumanie au sujet de la note de la Sublime Porte relative aux prétentions des communautés Grecques sur des propriétés appartenant aux couvents Roumains dits dédiés, son Excellence Lord Dufferin a fait comprendre à notre Représentant que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine serait disposé à admettre que cette question fût résolue par un arbitrage.

Je prends la liberté de rappeler à votre Seigneurie que mon Gouvernement considère cette question comme définitivement close, tous les biens conventuels de la Roumanie ayant été sécularisés, et l'État ayant pris à la charge du Budget l'entretien de l'Église et des écoles auxquels les revenus de ces biens étaient destinés.

Comment pourrait-il admettre qu'une question d'un ordre purement intérieur, puisqu'il ne s'agit ici que de biens faisant partie du patrimoine national, fut de nouveau ouverte.

Les Chefs des communautés des Lieux-Saints sont en possession de tous les documents concernant ces biens; ils se les sont procuré en les enlevant abusivement aux archives de l'État Roumain, et s'ils croient qu'en vertu de ces titres ils peuvent être en droit d'élever des justes prétentions, libre à eux de formuler leur demande de revendication sur ces propriétés, à titre particulier. La question ne peut être que de la compétence exclusive des Tribunaux. Mais le Gouvernement Roumain ne pense pas qu'on puisse donner à la question un caractère international.

Dans l'espoir que votre Seigneurie voudra bien reconnaître la justesse de mes observations, j'ajouterai que les Patriarches Grecs n'ont pas manqué de se présenter au Congrès de Berlin. Mais l'illustre Assemblée, tout en prenant en considération le Mémoire qu'ils ont présenté, n'a pas cru devoir formuler une solution une fois que cette Assemblée proclamait l'indépendance de la Roumanie.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) J GHIKA.

No. 51.

Mr. Ford to Earl Granville.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 114.)

(Telegraphic.)

Athens, December 28, 1881, 6·30 P.M.

THE complications arising out of the Post Office difficulty with Turkey still continue, and have been somewhat increased by recent retaliatory measures adopted by the Greek Government, and which have been mainly taken in order to satisfy the views of the party opposed to the present Government.

The general elections will take place next Sunday throughout the Kingdom of Greece,

and should the Ministerial party succeed in gaining a majority, it is to be hoped that befor long steps will be taken to settle the difficulties.

I do not fail to impress on Prime Minister the expediency of carrying on a policy of conciliation and moderation in his dealings with the Turkish authorities on this Post Office question.

(Sent to Constantinople.)

No. 52.

The Earl of Dufferin to Earl Granville.—(Received December 29, 4·5 P.M.)

(No. 452. Most Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 29, 1881, 2 P.M.

I HEAR, on good authority, that an idea was entertained by the Sultan of offering Crete and Rhodes to Germany in exchange for Bosnia. My informant does not know whether definite proposal in this sense was propounded at Berlin or not. If it was, he is inclined to think that it was not favourably received.

You may depend upon there being some foundation of truth in the foregoing.

No. 53.

Earl Granville to Sir E. Thornton.

E

(No. 461.)

Walmer Castle, December 29, 1881.

Sir,

THE Russian Ambassador, in the course of conversation with me this afternoon, assured me that there was no truth in the reports which had recently been circulated of an arrangement between Russia and Austria with regard to the Balkan Peninsula, and that it was difficult to conceive the object of those who propagated such absurd inventions, unless it were for stock-jobbing purposes.

You will readily understand that Her Majesty's Government could not regard with favour, or give their sanction to, any combinations which should have for their result a curtailment of the liberties and institutions secured to the provinces of the Balkan Peninsula by the Treaty of Berlin.

It is not necessary at present to make any declaration upon this point; but it is right that you should be aware that such is the view of Her Majesty's Government, and should be prepared to give expression to it if occasion should arise.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 54.

Mr. Kirby Green to Earl Granville.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 136.)

Scutari, December 19, 1881.

My Lord,

IN continuation of my despatch to your Lordship No. 132 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to report that the Hotti and Gruda Chiefs came to Scutari during the past week, on the invitation of the Military Commander, Abdi Pasha, and that satisfactory explanations have taken place between them and the Turkish authorities, ending in a payment of about 30,000 piastres to the Chiefs, as a small instalment of what is due to them for guarding the frontiers on the Podgoritza plain.

The Chiefs expressed themselves highly incensed at having been suspected of an intention to commence hostilities against Montenegro without the Sultan's order, and thus made it more clear than ever that they do not hold the Montenegrins responsible for the omissions towards them of the Turkish authorities, and that they are perfectly aware that they have other means of bringing pressure to bear upon the Porte than by placing themselves between two enemies.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 55.

The Law Officers of the Crown and Dr. Deane to Earl Granville.—(*Received December* 30.)

My Lord, *Temple, December* 30, 1881.

WE are honoured with your Lordship's commands signified in Lord Tenterden's letter of the 13th instant, stating that he had the honour to transmit to us, by direction of your Lordship, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, from which we should see that the Porte had called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the fortifications which were being constructed by the Russian Government within a short distance of the town of Batoum, a proceeding which the Turkish Government maintained was contrary to the spirit of the Treaty of Berlin and of the Protocols of the Congress.

That the text of the LIXth Article of the Treaty was as follows:—

"Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie déclare que son intention est d'ériger Batoum en port franc essentiellement commercial."

That, in order fully to appreciate the extent of that undertaking on the part of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, it was necessary to refer to the discussions in Congress, which resulted in the Article of the Treaty above quoted.

That we should find at pp. 207-210, and 239 of the accompanying Parliamentary Paper, the portions of the Protocols bearing on that subject.

That at the sitting of the Congress on the 6th July (see Protocol No. 14), Prince Gortchacow stated that he was authorized to declare that the Emperor, exercising his right of sovereignty, would declare Batoum a free port. Prince Bismarck called attention to the fact that that formed a considerable modification of the Treaty of San Stefano; that it facilitated the evacuation of Batoum, and its exchange for Erzeroum.

That the Earl of Beaconsfield, in accepting the proposal, spoke of it as the transformation of a disputed fortress into a free port and a commercial depôt for all nations; and that in the subsequent discussion as to the passage of the Straits, the Marquis of Salisbury declared that, if the acquisition of Batoum by Russia had been maintained under conditions which would menace the liberty of the Black Sea, England could not have taken the engagement towards the other European Powers to interdict to herself the entry to that sea; but Batoum having been declared a free and commercial port, the English Government would not decline to renew their engagements as to the Straits.

That in the remarks which Count Schouvaloff made in reply to the observations of the Marquis of Salisbury, his Excellency said that "it would be very easy to prove that Batoum constitutes a menace for no one, and that the possession of that port is only necessary to us for the purpose of securing our communications with the large territory which Russia already possesses on that portion of the Black Sea, and of securing her commerce; and that the declaration of the freedom of the port must have removed the last doubts. The port will become an important point for the commerce of the whole world; it could not be a menace to the Straits," &c.

That the Marquis of Salisbury thereupon stated that, understanding that Batoum was to be only a commercial port, he therefore accepted in principle the *status quo ante* for the Straits.

That to the interpretation thus given by the Second British Plenipotentiary to the declarations of the Russian Representatives no exception was taken at the time, and the declaration read by Prince Gortchacow at a subsequent sitting of the Congress was as follows:—

"The Plenipotentiaries of Russia have already announced to the Congress that the Emperor, their august Master, intends to convert Batoum into a free port. They are authorized to add that His Majesty further proposes to make of this port a port essentially commercial." (Protocol No. 16.)

That the Porte stated that, "not only are the old fortifications of Batoum left standing, but new ones are being constructed within a short distance of the town." (Lord Dufferin No. 972 of the 8th November, 1881.)

That that was confirmed by the Reports of Her Majesty's Consuls, and in the latest Report it was stated that much heavy artillery was being landed at Batoum for the fortifications there, which was placed in store, while earth-works and batteries were constructed at commanding points, and communications between them established by tramways.

That Lord Tenterden was to request that we would take the matter into our

consideration, and favour your Lordship with our
stated as to the military works now proceeding
the LIXth Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and of
Plenipotentiaries at the Congress, and would just
reports on the subject, the parties to the Treaty of B
tations to the Government of Russia.

In obedience to your Lordship's commands we have the honour to report—

That we do not think the facts above stated as to the military works proceeding at Batoum so clearly constitute a violation of the LIXth Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and of the assurances given by the Russian Plenipotentiaries, as to justify, without awaiting more detailed reports on the subject, the parties to the Treaty of Berlin in addressing any remonstrances to the Government of Russia.

The question, is whether the undertaking of Russia, that Batoum should be a free and essentially commercial port, coupled with the assurances given in the course of the discussion, excludes the right to erect any fortifications there. No definite assurances were given or required with reference to the construction of fortifications. It appears not improbable that the Plenipotentiaries of Russia and Great Britain purposely avoided any definite discussion of this point. If, then, the right of Russia to construct the fortifications is excluded, it must be because this is involved in the undertaking given by Russia, read in the light of the discussions which preceded it.

But it does not appear to us perfectly clear that it is so excluded. Though the port may be essentially, or indeed exclusively, commercial, it does not seem to follow that fortifications may not be erected for its defence. It could hardly be contended that Russia, having created a great commercial emporium, was bound to leave it defenceless and at the mercy of Turkish cruizers, should any conflict arise between the two countries.

It would not be to the interest of the nations who may trade there that this should be the case.

And if the fortifications are defensive only, it would not be, in the words of Count Schouvaloff, "a menace to the Straits."

We think that Russia probably did undertake that Batoum should not be converted into an arsenal as a basis for offensive operations.

But we see no evidence that the fortifications go beyond what may be fairly necessary for the defence of an important commercial centre, and it therefore seems to us that more detailed information is necessary before we are in a position to assert that there has been a violation of the LIXth Article of the Treaty.

We have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY JAMES.
FARRER HERSCHELL.
J. PARKER DEANE.

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